VINDICATION

OF THE

Rights and Privileges

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Christian Church.

In which are Defended

The Divine Charter of its Incorporation.

The Divine Institution of its Ministry.

Its Authority in Ordination, Discipline and Censures.

And the Confiftency of all these with the Supremacy of the Civil Magistrate.

In Answer to a Late Book Intitul'd The Rights of the Christian Church Asserted, &c.

By JOHN TURNER, D.D. Vicar of Greenwich, and Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Earl of Scarbrough.

LONDON:

Printed for John Wyar, at the Rose in St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1707.

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DEDICATION

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May it please four Earls in.

O Pardon me the Liberty
I have taken in Prefixing
Your Lordship's Name to this
small Treatise, and in begging
Your Patronage and Favourable
Acceptance of it. It is not, fac
sure Your Lordship, any Opinion
I have of the Performance, that
makes me Prefume to far, but the
Pleasure and Satisfaction I take in
making Public Acknowledgments

of the Obligations I am under to

Your

DEDICATION.

Your Lordship, for Repeated Kindnesses and Favours for the Space of

almost Twenty Years.

I am Countenanc'd in this too, by the Justice and great Excellency of the Cause I have undertaken to Vindicate. That of the Christion Church and Clergy, against the most Malicious Revilings of those Libertines, who thro our Sides Wound the Bleffed Mafter we ferve, and in their Attempts upon his Religion, Crucifie the Son of God afresh, and put him to an Open Shame. And under whose Protection could I more Reasonably defire to appear, on so Just an Occasion, than that of Your Lordthip? Whose Learned Labours have so often Defended, and whose Sweethels of Temper and Bright Example are such an Honour and Ornament to our Holy Religion.

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DEDICATION

Since we are fal'n into those Degenerate Times in which Bold Efforts are made against both the Christian Religion and its Ministry; Happy are we, Happy our Church and Nation, that we have fuch Fathers of our Church, whose Advantageous Character for their Great Learning, Wisdom and Piety shews, in spite of all that Malice can infinuate to the contrary: That the Best of Religions has the Best of Pastors. And such as both by their Writings and their Lives approve themselves to be Men of God; Sent and Sanctify'd, Authoriz'd and Directed by his Holy Spirit.

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If this Performance shall but be found in any Tolerable Measure Suitable, and Serviceable to the Good Design for which it is intended; viz. to Convince the World of the Wickedness of the Book

DEDICATION

Book I Write against, of the False. nels of its Reasonings, the Danger of its Principles, and the Contempt which it labours to bring on all Gospel Institutions: I shall think my felf Secure, not only of Your Lordship's Pardon for, but Approbation of my well-meant Endeavours. And then shall have cause to Rejoyce and be Delighted, that I have so Inviting an Occasion of Professing how much I am with all Gratitude, Sincerity and Duby their Writings and their I

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Book

Your Lordship's

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PREFACE

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FTER the Christian Church bas Sub-I fifted about Seventeen Hundred Tears by a continu'd Succession of Pastors and Ministers, Preaching, Buptizing and Performing other Divine Offices in the Name of God and Christ: it must surprize and startle any Man, to find a Large and Plausible Book publish'd on purpose to tell the World; That this Mystical Body of Christ stands at last but on the Same Foundation with all Private Meetings. Assemblies and Clubs. That the whole Society is without any Divine Authority and Powers; the Members of it, as yet but in a state of Nature without any Divine Obligations or Privileges in this respect; and the Ministers too without any other Commission or Right to their Function, than what they derive originally from the Magistrate and the People. W'hat

What can such a Writer mean or drive at? If we may be allow'd to guess at his Intention by the Natural Tendency of his Principles: we have great Reason to conclude; that whatever fair Pretences are set forth, yet nothing less than Undermining Christianity, and Proclaiming to the World the no Necessity of that Religion to Salvation, could be the Real Design and Intention of such an

Undertaking.

If this be indeed his Aim, the Reader must not wonder to sind him fall foul upon the Clergy above all Things, with the most scurrious Contempt and scornful Disdain that Profane Wit and Malice could invent. These are an Order of Men Instituted and Appointed by Christ himself to Preach, and Defend, and Propagate his Religion. And they to be sure, as long as they are continued, will be as so many Ramparts and Bulwarks to the Defence of the Society and of all its Divine Institutions. And therefore these, as the Outworks of the City, are to be first Assaulted, Taken and Ruin'd, or all other Attempts must be Foolish and Unsuccessful.

Christ who ordain'd the Ministry has ordain'd, that They also as other Men should Live and he Maintain'd by their Function. And even this Ordinance our Adversary has endeavour'd with Craft enough to turn to his

Advan-

Advantage. And that by telling the World, whenever the Clergy Defend themselves and their Function against these Clamorous Outcries and Revilings; That their great Di-ana, Interest and Power are struck at, and they have all taken the Alarm. Thus our Replies must be represented to the World not as grounded on Reason and Truth, nor as proceeding from Principle and Conscience, but from Avarice and Ambition, and an Earnest Zeal to Support our Usurpations and Corruptions. And if we complain of the Wickedness of his Principles, and their Natural Tendency to countenance Impiety: he has his Plausible Turn ready upon all Occasions; That nothing fooner gives a Man the Character of an Atheist, than his being an Ene- Page 415. my to Priestcraft. And by the Covert of this ly Suggestion he Palliates the vilest Attempts upon our Religion. By all this Cunning and Artifice has this Author undeavour'd to Expose the Clergy, and to Represent all that they fay or write in their own as Unfit to be look'd on or Re-Defence, garded.

And as there are a Multitude of Loose and Vicious Persons in the World, easily susceptible of all ill Characters thrown on the Ministers of that Religion which is a Check to their Sensual Pleasures, and a Terror to their

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Consciences: so to be sure there must be a great many that will lend a willing Ear to all Complaints and Accusations against them. In Considence of which, and of whose Peculiar Affection and Favour the Author of this late Book has made his Appeal to the Laity, and apprehensive of the great and just Displeasure of the Ecclesiastics, he hopes and intreats that they will think sit to take him into their Protection.

I do not know, but that those of the Laity who are Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God, and willing with this Renown'd Author to give up the Holy Profession into which they were Baptiz'd: may also be very ready to Protect the Man and Defend bis Undertaking. And those too, whom be can by his subtle Devices, of which we are Ignorant, Allure and Seduce from the Guidance and Good Influences of the National Church and Clergy at this time: may for ought I know be in danger of falling into the Same Condemnation. But as for those of the Laity who are Honest Men and Christians, who have both Zeal and Understanding in the way of Godliness, and hope for Salvation by the Meritorious Expiation and Atonement of the Bload of Christ: we dare, and I do now Solemnly Appeal to them, to Judge between us, not only of the Looseness of this Author's

Author's Principles, and the Weakness of his Reasonings, but also of the Wickedness of his Design. And to this end I expo-

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1. The Reasonableness and Innocency of Inveighing and Exclaiming in so Bitter, Seurrilous and Insolent a manner against the whole Body of the Christian Clergy, Bishops, Priefts and Deacons, from the Apostles down to our own Times. Not on the Perfonal Miscarriages of Men, but on the whole Tribe with all their Claims, Authority and Institution. If our Order and Institution be indeed what I think the Gospel proves it to be, viz. of God: these Reflections fall not on us alone, but on that Bleffed God whose Divine Commission has appointed us. And I would desire this Gentleman and his Abettors ferioully to consider that. Again, when he not only gives it in as a Solemn Memorial and Representation, that the Poverty of the Clergy is the best Security of Religion, but even Disputes the Magi-Page 219. strate's Right and Power of Appropriating 220. any setled Maintainance upon them, and would have 'em to subsist only by the Alms Page 22. of the People: I appeal to every Honest and Under standing Lay-man, what this Author could have in view by these Suggestions but to obstruct and destroy all the Good Influences

of Christianity. The Clergy are but Men. however Sacred the Offices to which me are appointed. And Men of like Passions and Infirmities with our Bretbren. Who as equally affected with the Comforts and Afflictions of Life, and baving the same sense of Shame, and Indigency, and Contempt with other Men: must be allowed, if our Ministry were but of Human Institution, to complain of the Great Hardship of being consined to perpetual Need, Servitude and Beggary. And yet, that's not all, I appeal whether this Despite and Contempt to our Order can posfibly be without making even the Ordinances themselves in which we Minister, to share in the Reproach. 'Tis not possible that our Perfons or Office alone should suffer in such Debasement; the Religion we Preach must take part with us in our Disesteem. The Poor Eccles. 9. Man's Wisdom is despis'd, and his Words are not heard. There is so near a Relation between a Man's Character and bis Counfel; and the Regard had to bis Person and his Instruction is commonly so much the Same: that by this Method the Efficacy of our Ministry must needs become as little as this Gentleman pretends our Authority to

This Project of our Adversary's is so Craftily laid, that if I were embark'd with him

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in so Vile and Detestable a Design, I would join with him in this, and every other Method that could render the Preachers of Christianity contemptible. The want of Tolerable Fortunes must needs cause a General want of Learning too. And he who forms a Scene to make the Clergy at once both Ignorant and Poor, will soon find his Account in it. That Contempt, which these two Qualifications, when United, bring along with them, will make both their Doctrin and Instruction as little

valu'd as themselves.

With what Authority can the Poor Prieft, as the usual Language is on such Occasions, admonish the Great Man of his Parish of Drunkenness, Whoredom and Adultery, when it may be the Greater part of his Sublistance depends on his Favour; And a bare Surmise of Diffetisfaction at his Immorality, threatens the Extremity of Want to the Paftor and bis Family? It's Happy in such a Case if the Resolute Piety and Constancy of the Clergyman Secures him from the Dangerous Infection of the ill Company of Such a Patron and Parishioner. But it must needs make his Ministry ineffectual; and when he is once thus run down by the Great ones, the meanest of the People know how to follow the Example. These are the Genuine Fruits and Effects of taking away the Preferments, and increasing the Pover-

ty of the Clergy. And these things do so Naturally and Necessarily Result from my Adver-Sary's Proposals: that what I complain of as Evils and Grievances, are, I am verily perfuaded, the Benefits and Advantages that he in-

But however, fuch Suggestions at this time are very Unfeasonable both in Prudence and Good Manners. At a time when Her Majesty of Her most Religious and Tender Concern for the Church of England and the Poor Clergy thereof, has been Graciously Pleas'd to part with a Confiderable Branch of Her own Revenue for their Relief; and when the whole Estates of the Realm Affembled in Parliament, Sensible of the Difadvantage to Religion in the Poverty of its Preach-All of Par. ers, who, while depending for their Mainrainance on the Good will and Liking of their Hearers, have been, and are under Temptation of too much Complying, and fuiting their Doctrins, and Teaching to the Humours rather than the Good of the Hearers, which has been a great occasion of Faction, and Schism, and Contempt of the Ministry, have therefore thought fit to Confirm Her Majesty's Royal Bounty for the Augmentation of their Maintainance: comes this Gentleman with one or two of his Abettors, and by a side Wind calls 'em all a Parcel of Idiots and Novices, that know neither the Interest of the

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the Church, nor the Good of Religion, which they vainly think may be promoted by Removing the Poverty of the Clergy, when he esteems that their Greatest Advantage and Security. Is not this a very Respectful Compliment to Her Majesty and the Government: and a Mighty Deference paid to their Wisdom and their Piety? If a Precarious, Depending Maintainance brings Clergy-men under the Temptation of too much Complying even to a Contempt of their Ministry : what Secu. rity canthis be to Keligion? Rather, what less than an Universal and Irretrievable Corruption of it were to be expected: if every Congregation had the Right and Fower not only of Paying or Starving, but even of Making, or Unmaking their Ministers? This mast needs be infinitely more Dangerous and more Mischievous. In that in the very Nature of things there is fo close and near a Relation between our Order and our Offices, between the Christian Ministry and the Christian Worship and Sacraments: that I never yet met with a Man who fpake contemptibly of the Parsons, as they call 'em, and who without distinguishing between the Personal Miscarriages of Men and the Divine Institution of the Orders of 'em, had the Clergy in General Disesteem: but that there appear'd also in his Practice and Conversation a Proportionable Want of due Reverence and Regard to the Christian

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Christian Religious Worsbip of God, and to all the Divine Offices and Orders of it. And this too is so Natural a Procedure, that I should wonder to find it otherwise. For, if there be no Divine Authority in the Ministry in General, there can I think be no Divine Obligation or Efficacy in the Sacraments. All depends upon the Institution of God and Christ, who by the Gospel Law and Promises have made these Ordinances Christian Duties and Seals of our Covenant, and Instrumental Means and Methods of Salvation. And consequently must Somewhere or other have lodg'd the Power of Acting and Officiating in his Name, and of Stipulating and Covenanting by bis Authority. And this, not by mere Natural Rights, which can on no ground pretend to reach it, but by that very Divine Revelation and Commission on which God's Promises and our Covenant with him stand. This our Author himself was so sensible of, that he endeavours indeed to Depreciate and leffen our Opinion of the Necessity both of the Christian Worship, and of the Christian Sacraments, as well as of the Christian Ministers. The Necessity of our Worship by afferting to all Mankind an equal Right of Worshipping God any other way besides what the Gospel teaches: if they can but in their Consciences so judge it best. Of which more anon. And as to the Sacrament, be tells us expresly, That the Clergy to advance their

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their Interest and Power, and because their Page 94. Ambition could only be satisfy'd with Abso-95, 103. lute Power: therefore they made it their 247. Business to perswade the People, That Receiving the Lord's Supper was necessary to Salvation, and that they only had a Right to give it, &c. Tis not then the Clergy's Right alone, but the very Necessity of the Divine Ordinance or Sacrament that is struck at by this Good Christian Writer in all the Places now referr'd to in the Margin. And I hope that all the Laity see even in this alone what manner of a Reformation be is driving at.

But fays be, the best of Religions has the Page 118. worst of Priests, and the Pretending to Divine Rights is the Foundation of all Miscarriages and Corruptions. As to any Corruptions, of the Clergy that he could justly complain, and would have made Representations of, and with Modesty and due Respect to the Function, would have propos'd Methods of Reforming: I doubt not but the Governors both in Church and State would have known and taken care of a fit Reply to him. Or had it been the Romish Clergy only, or those others who run the Pontificate to an equal heighth with them, that he had written against, and so bad taken upon him a Province that would have been both Easy and Useful, viz. to Reconcile our Proceedings in the Reformation with the Divine Institution of the Christian

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Church and Ministry: he had never heard from me I promise him on this Occasion; but I would have left his Gainfayers to have defended themfelves and their Principles as well as they could. But when nothing less will serve him than cutting off all Divine Claims, whether in the Church or Ministers, Root and Branch, Denying all Divine Authority in the one, and all Divine Institution in the other, and the Neceffity too both of the Christian Sacraments, Faith and Worship: let every one judge whether this Loud and Vehement Cry against the Clergy is not for the fake, and out of Enmity to the Religion in which they Minister. These Men, if admitted, will speak, and will be able to speak in defence of the Christian Revelation. And therefore till they are wholly taken away, or at least by their Power made Despicable, and Useless and Contemptible: such Designs as this Brave Writer has in view can never be accomplish'd. But take away thefe, and then the Religion, however fairly spoken of at present, will be fit to be Exploded as well as the Priestbood. I know that this Author has made some faint Endeavours to mitigate and extenuate his own Infamous Charge upon the Glergy, by pretending that he means only the Popish, East-Page 303. ern, Presbyterian and Jacobite Clergy (who

Page 303. ern, Presbyterian and Jacobite Clergy (who Pref. 82, are infinitely the Majority,) as well as too many of the Church of England falling into Noti-

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Notions inconsistent with our Legal Establishment. But what an empty and trissing Evasion is this, when in the very same Page we are taught, that no Man who believes any Divine Rights belonging either to the Church or Clergy can come within the Number of those whom he pretends to except? I must therefore rather look upon it only as an Artisice to Evade the Censure and Lash of the Law, which he had some reason to be apprehensive of.

That I do not at all misrepresent him, will I

think be more plain, if we consider next,

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2. The Natural Tendency of such an Unlimited Toleration of all Religions as he appears to plead for. Had it been only for Tolerating the several sorts, or sects of Christians among our selves, who agree in the same Common Faith and Fundamental Principles both of Belief and Wor-(bip: I (bould less have wonder'd. But it is as clear as Light it felf, that such a Toleration suits not his Purpose and Design, because it suits not his Principles and the Reasonings that he goes upon. He founds his Arguments for it upon the pretended Natural, Inherent, Unalienable Right of Mankind, and on a Supposition that all Mankind has the Liberty of Worshipping God each Man in his own way. Juch an Argument as this, if it had any Force at all in it, must conclude as strongly for Tolerating and even Protecting Mahometan, Jewish and Pagan

Pagan. Worship, as well as that of Christ and his Apostles. For Natural Rights are Univerfally the same to them and us, and Common to Infidels as well as Christians. The Consideration of which has startled me, and made me Wonder and stand Amaz'd, to find so many of our Christian Brethren falling in with this Gentleman's Notions and Principles, and Applauding his Design, and Commending his Performance. Especially too, when he brings in the Presbyterian as well as the Popish and Jacobite Clergy, and Denies the Authority of their Orders and Government as well as ours. I am no Preacher, or Promoter of Persecution; and yet methinks it looks like ungratefully Abusing the Clemency of the Government, when every Year, and Month almost, brings to light some new extravagant Book, with Heretical and Irreligious Principles. And bold Efforts are daily made against Religion, Some attacking one Doctrine of it, and some another. Some deny the Doctrin of the Trinity, and others teach that there are no Mysteries in Christianity, and others turn'em all into Tale and Ridicule. Some affert that Man is under no Necessity of Dying, and others that He has no Soul, and others that that is A Principle naturally Mortal. Some complain of the Discipline of the Church, and others at-tempt to Impoverish and pull down its Miniftry.

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nistry. And when at last this Author comes, and with open Mouth and a bare Face pleads for an unbounded Toleration of all these Things One would wonder that any but the Libertines of the Age should favour and be fond of Juch an Undertaking. Are Christians indeed willing to break thro' all the Legal Establishments of the National Church at the Hazard and Expence even of Christianity it self? And to let in Turks, Deifts, Socinians, Papifts, and even Pagans to Establish their Worship among us, and to Seduce, and Corrupt, and Debauch our People by their Loose and Wicked Principles, rather than allow the Prince, and the Legistative Power any Authority in Regulating or Restraining our Religious Assemblies? If they are, their Zeal for Liberty is very great indeed, when it Exposes even the Christian Faith and Worship to all the Dangers and Insults imaginable. For my part, if I were either Turk or Pagan, Deift, or Socinian, and had a mighty zeal to Promote and Propagate my own Ungodly Principles: I should not know what bolder step to take towards the Extirpation of Christianity, than with this Author to strike at once both at the Clergy and all the Legal Establishments of the Christian Church. And if I should carry my Point in that, to the Ruin of them, I should then think my self very unfortunate, if out of all the loofe Dege-

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PREFACE.

Degeneracy and Corruption of Humane Nature, and the too great proneness of Mankind to wicked Principles and wicked Practices: I bould not gain even numerous Proselytes to my Community however corrupt and unreasonable it was. So that I say if the natural tendency of Mens Principles and Pretensions may be admitted as a Guide to their Intentions and Defigns: What can an Universal, Unbounded Toleration of all Religions be good for, but only to Undermine and Break in upon Christianity?

I have spoken to this matter so far in the last Chapter which follows, that I shall now only give the Reader a farther Proof of this Author's Purpose and Inclination, by shew-

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3. How Inconsistent his Principles and Opinions are with a Belief of the Real necessity of a Man's being a Christian in order to Salvation. And under this Head I must mention first that Indifferent Disregardful and Contemptuous way of speaking of all Articles of Christian Faith, and all Ordinances of Christian Worship under the Prophane Cant of speculative Opinions and Superstitions. If you Speak of the Ordinances in the Gospel, Such as its Ministry and Sacraments, he will tell you of fuch Superstition as is Injurious to the Publick. He thinks it unreasonable and downright Church

Church Biggotry to suppose any Man abhorred by God on the account of his Opinions. And nothing is represented with a Blacker Charafter by this Author, than to Love or Effects any Man the lefs for the fake of his Opinions; Page 112, and for unavoidable differences in Opinions. And the proposing in a National Church any Articles of Faith, as Conditions of Communion or of admitting to the Ministry, is all brought under this repreachful Language of the Legislature chusing speculative Opinions Page 22, for the People, and tacking the Priests Preferments to fuch Opinions; and interweaving merely speculative Points and Modes of Worship into their Religion. If you urge the necessity of Believing the Divine Authority of the Christian Religion, or the Divinity of Christ, or the Metitorious Expiation and Satisfaction of his Death to the Remission of our Sins; the Divine Perforality of the Holy Ghoft, or the necessity of Divine Grace to Holines, or of the Christian Sacraments to Salvation: Thefe are such Articles as the Reader is to understand included under the General Words of Speculative Opinions and modes of Worship; and fuch as we have too much Reason to suspect are here particularly intended by this Writer. I appeal to the Laity to Consider and to Judge between us, whether this Author has made any Exception thro' bis whole

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whole Book to any one Principle, or to any one Religion what soever! No. Nothing fit to be exempted from the Natural Right of Toleration; nothing fit to be Restrain'd and Discountenanc'd by the Government but Atheism. And that too, not for God's sake, but only as injurious to Mankind as Members of Society. But as to all who do but profess to own a God, whether Jupiter or Mars, Moloch or Baal; all Religions and all Principles of what sort or kind soever, have, according to our Author, a Natural Right to the Public Ex-

ercise of their Worship, and Preaching their

Doctrins without restraint.

If this were True and Reasonable, one would imagine that all these several Persons and People did equally stand fair for God's Favour and Good-liking, and Acceptance of 'em in these their several ways. And without any hazard to their Salvation, tho' in False, Idolatrous, Corrupt Religions. Otherwise, methinks, it should be both Reasonable and a Duty in a Christian Magistrate not to Tolerate, but to Restrain and Suppress the Public Exercise and Increase of those false Religions that must be Eternally Destructive to their Subjects Souls. But if they are all sase in their salse Religions, then what Necessity of Christianity? Or how can the Wisdom of God in sending his Blessed Son into the World by his Death

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Death to purchase our Redemption be vindicated, if Mankind was equally safe without it? Methinks this Author must give up either his Universal Toleration which he so Zealously contends for, or else the Christian Gospel as not Necessary to the Salvation of Mankind.

It is not hard to determine which of the two he is most willing to part with. He has told us his Mind plain enough in that respect by some other of his Principles, that are as little consistent with the Obligation and Necessity of Christian Faith to Salvation as any of the former. All that God, who commands not Impossibilities, requires of us, is an Impartial Examination, and confequently that alone, provided we act agreeably, makes us Page 16. Acceptable to him. And therefore ought to render us fo to Man, who can have no Right to fix Rewards and Punishments to things which are not of a Moral Nature. That is to Say, if this Author were to Speak out his own Meaning plain, "With whatever " Zeal and Earnestness Men may plead the " Necessity of their Believing the Gospel and " being Christians in order to Salvation: yet " a Sincere Examination is all that is re-" quir'd; And that alone, provided we act

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y his Death " agreeably, will make us Acceptable to God, whether we believe the Gospel or no.

" And indeed, if it were but safe to speak it out to the World, God has no more Right " than Man to fix Rewards and Punish-" ments to things which are not of a Mo-" ral Nature. For however you may talk of " Faith and Believing, Speculative Points, " and Matters of Opinion, to make any " thing but Infincerity a Sin, is to make Page 115. " God himself the Author of Sin in so fra-" ming our Understanding, that after we " have done all we can to avoid it, we ne-" ceffarily fall into it." That is, according to our Author's true Meaning and Intention, (for Principles of this Nature must not be deliver'd out in too broad Expressions) " to make " Infidelity and Unbelief a Sin, is to make " God the Author of that Sin. Because be " only is the Author of my Unbelief, in not fo " framing my Understanding that upon a " sincere Examination I might believe." Is not this home to the Parpofe, that no Faith in Christ is necessary to Salvation, nor any Nesessity of being a Christian, or Believing the Gospel: but a Jew, or a Heathen, or a Mahometan is altogether as acceptable to God, if he does but use a sincere Examination and act accordingly? For nothing but Infincerity can be a Sin. Thefe are, you see, apparently our Adversary's avow'd Principles and Opinions. And what is this but striking directly at

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the very Root of Christianity all at once, and denying with one Breath the Necessity both of Christian Faith and Christian Worship, as well as the Divine Rights of the Christian Church, and the Divine Institution of its Ministers? In which Reflections I cannot but wonder with the highest Admiration and Astonishment, to find so many of our Christian Brethren however desirous of a Toleration: to Approve and Appland a Book that tends so directly, under that soft Name, to Extirpate Christianity and Establish Deism, if not A-

theism also, in its place.

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As to the Truth of that his Principle that a fincere Examination is sufficient to make us Acceptable to God, I make it my Request to him, when he Publishes his second Volume, or writes next on this Subject : that he will Reconcile this Notion with that Solemn and Important Declaration of our Blessed Saviour, He Mark 16. that Believeth and is Baptized shall be fa- 16. ved, but he that Believeth not shall be damned. I am verily apprehensive that in such an Enquiry be will find a Sincerity of Judgment Necessary, as well as a Sincerity of Examination. I mean, a Mind absolutely free from the Influence of all Lusts and Passions, of all Indirect Ends and Interests, of Pride on one hand and Scnsuality on the other, in the Determination of its Opinions and Belief, before

fore it can make any Claim to Such Impunity. And as it is not a Man's pleading his Sincerity, but the Justice of this Plea, of which God and Christ are the only Proper Judges, that can avail him at the last Great Day: So I am perswaded also, that he will find the true Intention of that Text to be, to affert such Bright and Conspicuous Testimonies of Divine Authority and Truth in the Christian Revelation, that no Man can reasonably plead a Sincerity of Examination or Judgment, who has heard this Gospel and does not believe it. And this is a Matter of that great Importance, that every one who reads such a Scripture had need to be very Sure that their Sincerity will be found absolutely Incontestible before the Judgment of Almighty God. But to return, and give the Reader a farther Evidence yet of the Wickedness of this Performance, and its being Design'd directly against the Christian Religion: Ishall now take leave.

4. To set before him from whom this Writer has taken several of these his Principles and Expressions. There are two Books extant, that are the fullest of Scandalous Resections and Profane, Scornful, Impious, Blasphemous Revilings of the Blessed Son of God Christ Jesus and his Religion, that my Eyes ever yet saw. The Author of em is gone to his own Place, and did not die the Common Death of all Men.

From

From these very Books has our Adversary in the Churches Rights, extracted several of the above-nam'd Principles and Reasonings. They not only agree in decrying Persecution, for which I (bould not have blam'd them: but in representing all Restraint on wicked Antichristian and Dangerous Principles and Opinions under this invidious Character of Persecuting for Opinions; and thus they both set up for an unrestrain'd Toleration of Socinianism, Deism, and perhaps Atheism too. Its neither Policy, Reason, nor Religion, says the one, to Persecute Men for Conscience sake, so long as they disturb not the Publick Peace. Every Man, Page. 15, Says the other, has a natural Right to chuse 16. his own Religion, and the Magistrate can have no Authority to hinder this, follong as nothing is done contrary to the Publick Good of the Society. Tolerating different Opinions, says the one, is so far from disturbing the publick Peace, or destroying the Interests of Princes and Common-wealths, that it advantages the Publick, and fecures Peace, because there is not so much as the pretence of Religion left to fuch Persons to contend for it. Opinions, Says our Author, which each Page 118. fide may hold without the least Prejudice to the other, are not in their own Nature apter to create Unkindness, than different Features and Tafts; and therefore the Good of the b .4

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Society being the Supreme Law, all Church Confiderations must give way to it - And the Magistrate has no Right to Disturb any on this Account, as long as they do nothing Prejudicial to the Public. Thus do these two Famous Writers combine to exclude the Magistrate from any Authority in Suppressing false Religions and Opinions; and consent rather to thrust all Religion out of the World, than to suffer Mankind to be under any Restraints about it.

Again, as to Christian Faith and Belief, the Deist does not like that you should begin at Faith, and tells you that, if he cannot believe ris a fign that the Evidence is not strong enough to make him, and that if he errs, he errs after Inquiry; and if he be fincere in his Principles, he can when dying appeal to God. So our Author, That sincere Examination is all that is requir'd to make us Pag. 115. acceptable to God, and that nothing but Infincerity can be a Sin unless God himself be the Author of that Sin, in not framing their Understandings otherwise than they are. Thus thefe two good Orthodox Writers Consent expresty to deny the Necessity of Christian Faith in order to Salvation, and with a bold-

ness almost peculiar to themselves, ascribe the Guilt of their Infidelity, rather to God in form-

ing their Understandings, than Juffer their own Sincerity to be suspected.

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If our Author tells you as one of his wife Remarks, That Men have generally Interwo- Page 20. ven into their Religion some mere speculative Points, and particular Modes of Worship, with certain Rites, Ceremonies and other indifferent Things: This is Language which he had learnt of his great Master who taught him; That before Religion, that is to fay, Sacrifices, Rites, Ceremonies, pretended Revelations and the like were invented, there was no Worship of God but in a Rational way: Till they were seduced by the Crafty and Sacerdotal Order. His very bitter Invectives and Scornful Reproaches of the Clergy, with which this Author has fo much Indulg'd and Pleas'd and Delighted himself: He has borrow'd from the same Author, and written after the same Copy. Only with this difference; That the one out of Awe and Fear of the Government, wounds the Christian Clergy chiefly thro' the Sides of the Heathen Priests; and scarce directly mentions any but them alone: While this Gentleman with more Effrontery attacks us bare Fac'd, declaring, That the best Pag. 118. of Religions has the worst of Priests, and the Clergy are the Bane, the Source, the first and the last, the beginning and end of all its Corruptions. Its not uncommon for apt Scholars in this kind of Learning to outdo their Masters; and to make Improvements of former Schemes

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Schemes in Such Designs. I only therefore beg the Reader, whether Clergy or Layman, when he Reads and Views this Author's Performance, and examines his Notions, and observes with me the Tendency of his Principles: That he will also reflect a little from whence all this is borrow'd and deriv'd. And when he has done all this, if he has but common Honesty and Understanding of his own Religion, I dare appeal to him, and abide by bis Verdict: Whether there be not other and more and greater Reasons, to Suspect his Sincerity in the Christian Religion, and to believe him very Indifferent and Unconcern'd as to the Success and Importance of that: Besides his violent and vigorous Attacks made on the Powers of the Church and Clergy? And whether any Man who is not as Cool and Indifferent in his Religion as he: can Applaud or Approve such a loofe wicked and Antichristian Book? But

5. I must beg liberty to close all this with some short account of the Character of this Man. One would indeed wonder what Pleasure Men should take in being such zealous Advocates for Profaneness and Irreligion. But there are oftentimes such Circumstances attending these Writers, which when known do sufficiently account for their several Attempts. And especially, when their Principles and Writings are all of a piece with their Practice and Con-

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Conversation. If common Fame does not mistake in her account of the chief Author of this Book and his Character: Better usage was not reasonably to be expected from him, neither by the Church of Christ, nor its Clergy. A Man who according to common Report, when the more than Ordinary Extravagancies of Youth had fent him into the World with so indifferent an Esteem and Reputation, that his Business could in no wife answer his Ambition and Desires. He fell under the dangerous Temptation of Prostituting his Conscience to his worldly Advancement; and of changing his Religion in expectation of Preferment. And a choice Man would he have been for such a Communion, notwithstanding all his present seeming Displeasure against Popery and Persecution: Had not an unlucky Revolution as he may call it, tho' a most valuable Blessing in it self, spoil'd all his Defign. However, an unsettled Traveller is never out of his way, and he that can once change a Good Religion for a Bad one, will always know how to turn Tail again, and be willing and ready for any Community and any Principles that he can get by. And as such a Man having by this time but little to lose; must needs be pretty safe in any bold Adventure: So, who can wonder at his great Readiness to attack all Church Authorities and Powers

PREFACE.

Powers Ecclesiastick: That had been already a starving Advocate under em, and in two Church Communities succeeded so very ill,

and been so miserably defeated?

And what is then left for such a Man to do, but to run in and join issue with the Deists and Libertines of the Age; and to turn Sollicitor for the loose and the Profane, as the only Persons that can now be heartily disposed to receive him?

In such Circumstances, who can wonder to find the Christian Church run down, its Divine Offices and Ordinances trifled with, its Sacraments ridiculed, its Worship made of no esteem: And the Clergy maliciously abused, and treated with all the Scorn, and Disdain, and Contempt imaginable? The Difciple is not above his Mafter, nor the Servant above his Lord. If they have called the Master of the House Beelzebub. How much more they of his Houshold? The only wonder is why this Ungodly Book comes out under the specious Title of Asserting the Rights of the Christian Church. But the Devil is never capable of doing more Mischief, than when he transforms himself into an Angel of Light. Nor his Perfidious Advocates of doing the Christian Church more Injury than under a Counterfeit Pretence of pleading its Cause. 'Tis the

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Matt. 10.

the true Property of an Apostate, a Judas . to Berray with a Kifs, and to aggravate Treachery and Iniquity by Hypocrific and Diffimulation. Its a very ungrateful Thing to me to be put under the necessity of taking this Publick Notice of the Personal Miscarriages of any Man. But when publick Attempts upon the Christian Church, and all the Divine Ordinances and Institutions of Christianity make it necessary: I hope it may be Pardoned in me. I would not have mention'd thefe Things, but to let the Reader, fee what manner of Reformation is to be expe-Eted from this kind of Men. And that this Author's Character and Conversation join d with the natural Tendency of the Principles of this Vewa Book: May make the Honest and Christian Laymen, to whom he and I now jointly Appeal, Sensible that it is not Power and Authority alone that we are now concerned for, but the Faith of Christ, which we Preach, and the Doctrins, and Worship of that Gospel, by which alone both they and we must obtain everlasting Salvation.

But I hear it said, that the Performance is not entirely his, of whom I am now speaking: but that there are one or two Abettors of this Work who have been affifting to him in Materials and otherwise. And these too, Men of great Sobriety and Untainted Morals. I am

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forry to think that it should be fo. Sorry to think that this Gentleman should have only the some of Prostituting his Pen as well as Conscience, while others are entitled to all the Wit and Learning of it. Sorry too for their Sakes. that Good Morals (bould be Blemished by wicked Principles, and social and Personal Virtues, become Unprofitable for want either of Zeal to the true Worsbip of God, or a firm Faith in the Meritorious Expiation and Redemption of his Blessed Son. All the Remark that I shall make on this supposed Truth, is that there are Spiritual Wickednesses as well as Carnal; and the former doubtless as provoking to God and as Dangerous to Men's Souls as the latter. 1 never yet hear'd that their old Friend the warm espouser of Deism, was blemish'd in his Conversation either for Adultery, Habitual Drunkenness, Perjury, or any Infamous Injustice. And yet he has shewed in his Writings I think more Diabolical Malice, and a much greater Malignity of Spirit against Jesus Christ the Eternal Son of God and the Bleffed Author and Captain of our Salvation, than Judas himfelf who betray'd him to the Cross. And what then can we fay to these things? Only this that when Men of Untainted Morals are thus loofe and Antichristian in their Opinions and Principles, they are capable of doing more Mischief to Religion. And God by Suffering these things, puts us

it

us under the greater Trial of our Constancy and Stedfastness. And I must take the Liberty to say, that as Allurements of this nature are not less Dangerous to some People, and to some Constitutions than those of Fersecution and Martyrdom: So neither will it less recommend us to God, nor be less beneficial to our selves to hold fast the Profession of our Faith against all such Dangerous Attempts and Delusions, and to Adorn it with an agreeable Purity and Holi-

ness of Life.

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And as to those more Licentious Gentlemen whose great Hope and Considence is in their boasted Sincerity, and the good proofs of a Sincere Examination: Let me tell 'em, that if they have any share of that Zeal for God, and Concernment for Religion and the Spiritual Good of Mankind, which this Book in several places makes a shew of; the best and greatest Evidence of such will be, in esteeming it a Glory and not a Shame, to Retract and Renounce rather than stiffy to Defend those Errors, which under a pretence of pleading for Christ's Church, Profane and Injure and do great Disservice to the Christian Religion.

I have not in the following Chapters taken much notice of our Author's numerous Quotations from History and Fathers, by which he has labour'd to set his Book off, and Recommend it to his Reader. This would not only unavoid-

ably

ably have drawn my Answer out to a much great. er length than I could think either Reasonable or necessary: But have made it also the les suit. able to many of the Laity for whose Advantage it is intended, and to whom we jointly appeal. Befides as I have the plain Testimony of the most Ancient and Primitive Fathers on our side of the Controvers : In those alone it will not be difficult to find out how his are misemploy'd. And as to the rest, they are either wrested and Forced to his Purpose against their Genuine meaning and intention; or elfe contain only the Priwate Sentiments of fome Particular Men in fome Remoter Matters, on which whether True or Falle, the Determination of this Controver fie does not at all depend. However if he has another Opinion of em, and thinks them of greater Moment to his Cause, I will not deny him a more Particular Examination of 'em, if that may be to bis or his Reader's Satisfaction.

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Christian Church, &c.

The Introduction.

S there is scarce any other Book yet Extant, that does more apparently strike at all the Divine Ordinances and Institutions of Christianity; and all that part of our Religion which respects the Worship of God, and the Christian Sacraments, and our Covenant of Grace in Jesus Christ, than this which I have now in hand: So there is, I think, none other whose Principles are more grosly Mistaken and False, and whose Reasonings upon them are more Trisling, and Empty, and Inconclusive.

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2 A Vindication of the Church of God.

This indeed is justly to be expected, if there be Truth and Certainty in the Christian Gospel. But among many of our Author's Heterodox Opinions, I must especially take Notice of two, which I take to be the great Fundamental Errors, that run thro' his whole Book, and are the Foundation of all his Dangerous and Mischievous Delusions, I mean, first his placing all manner of Jurisdiction, Authority, and Power, originally in the People. And from thence

Page 2.

deriving it to the Civil Magistrate, in all the most Sacred Offices of Christianity, as well

as in any other Acts of Government.

The other, as notoriously False, and if possibly, more abundantly Mischievous, is this: That every Man, without exception to either Jew, Turk or Pagan, has a Natural Right of Worshipping God according to his Conficience. And in all Matters of Religion, of

Page 15, fo following the Dictates of his own Conscience;
23. because as to these Matters. Men are still in a
State of Nature; that whenever they think

ge 25. fit, they may form themselves into a Church

after the best manner they can.

It is in consequence of these two Principles, that he has expresly told us; That a National Church is a Perfect Creature of the State, and has Represented every other Church, even the whole Church of Christ andced, as a Persect Creature of the People.

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It is upon these Principles that he has declar'd, That till the coming of Christ, all Religious Societies which were not of the Magistrates Perswasion, and I may add, says he, those that were, except they were so because Page 29. it was his, did subsist by this Natural Right. without Dreaming of Imperium in Imperio. that is, of an Independent Power. And had he gone no farther than this, we had been less concern'd in his Opinions, and might have flood indifferent without any nice Enquiry, whether they are True or False. But he goes farther, and lays this down as the only true Foundation of the Christian Church also, telling us, There can be no manner of Presence, why those Christian Religious Page 29. Assemblies that are not of the Magistrates Perswasion, may not maintain themselves by that Same Natural Right. And to those who mention the primitive State of the Christian Church, which could not have subsisted as it did. when the Magistrate was not of it, without fome Power and Authority from God, which the Apostles feem very plainly to have had: He replies, That the many Priests la their main stress on this Argument, which they usher rage 30. in upon all Occasions, with all the pompous Solemnity imaginable, and Triumph in it, as a demonstrative Proof of their independent Power: Tet, alas, the only Thing it demonstrates is, that they are either the most Ignorant of all Mankind,

in not feeing what the Light of Nature is, made plain to Men of all other Religions; or else the most Ambitious in endeavouring knowingly and designedly to Impose on the People in a Thing of the greatest Consequence, viz. That the Church of Christ was not sounded on a Power or Authority from God; but only on the Natural Ritghs and Liberties of the People. Thus it is that he levels the Church of Christ with all private Societies, Companies and Clubs; telling us in express Words, That is was by this Natural Right that the primitive Christians

Page 84.

acted.

In consequence of this it is, that he excludes from the Bishops and Governours of the Church, all the Power of Ordination, afferting the People's Right in every Congregation of making their own Minister.

To this end he Expostulates, What is more Page 80. requir'd to give one a Right to exercise the Office of a Minister in any particular Congregation, than an Agreement among them to chuse a Person capable, &c. And this private Churches P. 237. may do by a Right natural to all Societies what so ever. This is an inherent Fundamental Right

ever. This is an inherent Fundamental Right of all Communities, to please themselves in the Choice of their own Officers, and to Depose them at their Pleasure. Nay, by Virtue of these Principles, a Priesthood in community of the Principles, a Priesthood in community of the Principles.

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These are our Author's Opinions built upon his two first Principles, in consequence of which, nothing in all the external Offices of Religious Worship, can be allow'd to be from God, or of Divine Institution, or Authority. The whole Church, is made a meer Arbitrarious, Human Society, without any Divine Privileges or Ordinances. The Christian Ministry, a perfect Creature of the People, without any Thing Sacred or Holy in our Function. All Church Powers, Authorities, Ordinances, Constitutions, Discipline, Censures, and the like, according to this Author, come originally from the Multitude. And all its Acts of Rule and Government are condemn'd as illegal, and dangerous Encroachments on the People's Rights, that are not wholly manag'd by their Consent, and subjected to their Controul, and to their Revocations too, in every Instance whatsoever without Exception.

This is his monstrous Scheme of pernicious Principles, which not only subjects the whole Body of the Clergy, but even the whole Christian Religion to the capricious Humours and Fancies; not to say also, to the Enthusiasms and villanous Designs of all hypocritical Dissemblers. And not only breaks in upon all our present Constitutions and

B 3 Establish-

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Establishments, but undermines all Christianity, and naturally tends to deftroy all true Christian Piety and Holiness. In opposition to which, I shall now attempt to defend the facred Power and Authority of the Christian Church in general, as a Divine Society founded on an extraordinary Charter, and Commission from God the Father, by his Son Jefus Christ; from him convey'd and deliver'd to the Apostles, and so continued down in the Hands of an establish'd Ministry, of Divine Institution and Appointment. And in doing this, to shew the divine Right and Institution of the several Orders of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, with the Authority of their Ordination, their peculiar Right to the Administration of the Sacraments, with a share in the Government of the Church, as to its Discipline and Censures, and such like; in which as I shall shew the true ground of the Churches independent Power and Authority; to I hope to make it very plain, that all this is very Reconcilable and Confiftent with the Supremacy of the Civil Magistrate. To clear all this it will be necellary to trace Things up to the Fountainhead, and to fee by what Authority the Apostles and first Preachers of the Gospel proceeded. In that as the first Christian Church, or Churches were not National, nor fupported by the Civil Power, but acted indepenindependently on its Favour and Authority, and offentimes when Oppos'd and Persecuted by it: So nothing methinks can give a clearer or better Light, into the Knowledge of the Churches just Rights and Privileges under the Civil Magistrate, than to know what was the true original Foundation of its Authority; what Claims and Powers it had in its Primitive State; and how convey'd to it. And then what Alterations or Changes of them, the change of its external Condition made, and upon what Reasons and by what Authority.

To this end then, there are thefe four

Things to be consider'd.

I. That the Christian Church, and the Apostles and Pastors of it, in its first Beginning and Institution, did not act upon this pretended natural Right alone, but by a divine Power and Commission from God and Christ. Whereby the Church becomes a divinely instituted Society in a more eminent Sense, and a more extraordinary Manner, than any other Society upon Earth whatever.

II. That with the continuance of the Christian Church, there must also of necessity be a continuance of its divine Charter, and of the Power and Authority of its Mi-

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III. That the Authority and Power of the Christian Church and its Ministers, which are chiefly as to the divine Offices of Christian Worship, were not, could not be transfer'd, alienated, or lost upon its Coalition or Union with the State; but must

continue still with it.

IV. That such a divine Power or Authority, as it is only in the ministerial Exercise of those Holy Offices, that are essential to Christian Worship, and of divine Institution; is not at all inconsistent with the supreme Power of the Civil Magistrate, nor does any farther interfere with his Authority, than is absolutely necessary to the support of the Christian Worship and Religion. After these the Power of Ordination and other Things in course, will come to be consider'd.

And under these several Heads, most of the plausible Reasonings and Argumentations of this late Book will necessarily fall in our way; and shall not want a fair Hear-

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CHAP. I.

White Confirm Charles K.

Shewing the Apostles Divine Charter for the Establishment of the Christian Church.

I. HE first thing that ought to be particularly taken Notice of, is, That the Christian Church, and the Apostles and Pastors of it, in its first Beginning and Institution, did not act upon this pretended Natural Right alone, (of which our Author speaks) but by a Divine Power from God and Christ; whereby the Church becomes a Divine Society in a more eminent Sense, and in a more extraordinary Manner than any other Society upon Earth whatever.

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What else can this Author make of that Commission, which was undepiably given to Christ and his Apostles, and in a most stupendous manner Attested and Consirmed by the Miracles they wrought? He tells us indeed, That the Apostles, as appears by their Page 159. Commission, had no Power besides what was Miraculous, except to declare his Will by whom they were Commissioned; and where they do not attas his Messengers or Embassadors, to pretend only to offer their Advice. What does he mean

by all this? He owns that they were Commissioned by God to declare his Will. What was then that Will of God which they were to Declare? It was that they should make Difciples of all Nations, and Baptife them, and then Teach them more perfectly than before, all the Doctrins and Duties of the Christian Religion, calling them out from the rest of the World, to affemble together for the Worship of God, according to the Rules and Directions of the Gospel. This, I think, is undeniably and indisputably that Will of God which the Apostles were Commission'd to Declare, and as to which they confirmed the Truth and Divine Authority of their Commission by their Miracles. How then can it be pretended that they acted by a Natural Right alone? A Commission from Heaven giving Authority from God, and superadded to the Natural Rights, Privileges and Liberties of the rest of Mankind, is, I think, the very Subject now in Debate: And that the Apostles had such a Commission, is so very evident and plain, that this Author, notwithstanding all his Effrontery and Artifice in Shams and Evafions, has not the Face to deny: They were to declare his will by whom they were Commissioned. I hope he will allow that to be the Will of God. And if he does, methinks then it must follow, That the Apostles were Commissioned, and had

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had Power and Authority from God to the whole Work of the Gospel which they Preached. Ay, but fays he, Where they do not act as God's Messengers, they pretend only to offer their Advice. True, I grant it, and from thence must conclude, on the other Hand, That where they pretend to more than giving their Advice, they act in pursufuance of their Divine Commission, and have God's Authority for what they do. Consequently then, in Preaching the Gospel, in Administring the Sacraments, and in Affembling together for Chistian Worship, they acted by a Divine Commission and Authority from God, and not by this pretended Natural Right alone.

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Well, but says our Author, The Apostles had no Power but what was Miraculous, except thus to declare God's Will. This I must own is a dark Saying, and I cannot easily understand it. No Power but what was Miraculous, except to declare God's Will: Why, all their Apostolick Power, and the whole Work of the Ministry, not only in Declaring, but also in Executing God's Will was Miraculous, and in a most extraordinary manner derived from God. What does he then intend? If he means that they had no Power, but only to establish the Christian Religion, as Revealed to 'em by the Holy Ghost, and to work Miracles in confirmation of it:

I Answer, that this is enough. We defire

no more Jurisdiction and Authority than what we can make good our Title to by this Revelation thus Attested. If he means they had no Authority but what was peculiar to themselves and died with them: This I shall more particularly enquire into by and by. But if he means that which of all feems most likely, That the Apostles, who were fent to Preach the Gospel, and to gather together a Church of Christians, had only the Revelations of the Christian Do-Ctrins made to 'em, but were vested with no Power, Jurisdiction, or Authority by Divine Institution in or over the Church thus gathered; and, as he tells us in another Place, That Perswading People to frame them-Pag. 387 Selves into a Church, gives one no more Right to'em in Ecclesiasticals, than Reasoning 'em into a Common-wealth does in Civils; So if his aim and his Sense of the Apostles Commission be this, That they were empowred by Almighty God, to teach the Great Duties of Christian Holiness, and also to perswade Men to form themselves into a Society, but without acquiring any Divine Right to Govern them: To all this, I Answer. That as he does not scruple, it seems, to admit the conveniency of Church Ministers, if they be but owned Creatures of the People, and pretend to no Divine Right in Church-Govern-

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ment: So what Claims the Clergy have to that is a Question that will hereafter be considered. Our only Business is now to shew, that the Apostles had a Commission not only to Declare, but to Execute God's Will in gathering him a Church. And by it were not only to Perswade Men to form themselves into a Society, but had Authority from Christ to begin this Divine Work; to lay the Foundation of this Spiritual Building, and to carry on to as great a Persection as the Time and their Circumstances would admit.

They were indeed in their Preaching, to Reason, Perswade, and Convince; but then the Persons so convinced, were by God's Command also to be Baptised, and by that Baptism to be admitted into the Christian Society or Church. And as this was by God's Command, here was Executing as well as Declaring his Will; and not only Perswading the People to frame themselves into a Church, but actually Incorporating them into it, and Establishing and Modeling, and Settling em as an Ecclesiastical Body, and that too by express Precept and Command from Christ. All Power, says our Blessed Lord, Mat. 28.

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is given to me both in Heaven and on Earth; 17,18,8c. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The Power given to Christ on Earth, was, says the Learned Vossis. Har. Evangel.

a Pow- p. 410.

a Power of gathering to himself a Church. And a Power thus Solemnly convey'd, and on fo extraordinary an Occasion, as God's only Son newly Risen from the Dead, was to be fure an extraordinary Power, and fuch as none could claim by a Natural Right alone. By this Authority then derived from God the Bather, Christ Empowred his Apostles to Preach, by Preaching to Convince and Convert Disciples, and to admit their Converts into the Church of Christ by Baptism, That Sacrament is the Instituted Rite of their Incorporation: And therefore he that gave them Power to Baptize, in that gave them Authority also in the Divine Institution and Establishment of the Christian Church.

And as to the Government of the Church, if they mean no more by it than exercising Jurisdiction, in making Ordinances and Constitutions about Decency and Order, and the Rules of Edification, in Preaching, Administring the Sacraments, Ordination, and the like: It is undeniably apparent to every one that looks into the New Testament with any tolerable Seriousness and Sincerity, that the whole was entirely manag'd under the Apostles Authoritative Guidance, and Direction during their Time. They Preached, they Baptized, they Administred the Lord's Supper; they laid Hands on, and Ordain'd other Preachers, Elders, and Deacons; they

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ariswered Difficulties, determined Disputes; gave Rules; made Decrees; and every thing in the Christian Church was then Order'd, and Settled, and Established, not only by their prudential Perswasion and Advice, but indeed by their authoritative Sanctions and Constitutions. And that they did all this, not by a meer Natural Right or Power of their own, nor meerly by a Devolution of Jurisdiction and Authority from the People, but by Authority and Power derived from God: None, I think, can doubt, who will confider, 1. What a Solemn Defignation Christ made to 'em of that very Power and Authority which he himself received from the Father. And then again, 2. How extraordinarily, how continually they were under the immediate Guidance of the Holy Ghost in the discharge of their Sacred Functions and Apostolick Office; and by what Miraculous Operations that Bleffed Spirit gave Testimony to, and confirmed the Authority of what they did. The great care they take to give us Notice of it, whenever they determin any thing by Prudential Reafons and their Private Judgment only, plainly shews, that the rest is to be look'd on, and received as by Authority from Cod.

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ney red And indeed, if the Incorporation of this Society or Christian Church, was not by Commission and Power from God, as well

as Preaching and Perswading the People to it: How comes St. Paul to speak of it in fuch a manner as he does? Calling it the Body of Christ, to denote its Union with that Bleffed Head of the Church, and Captain of our Salvation, by whose Authority and Command it was first Established. And again, speaking thus of it; Te are God's Hou-(bold; ye are God's Building, being built on the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Cornerstone, in whom all the Building fitly framed together, groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord. The plainest and simplest meaning of which Words I take to be this, That as Christians were first Called and Incorporated into a Divine Society, by the Ministry and Preaching of the Apostles and Prophets: So the first Spring and Source of all their Authority and Power therein, and to that end, is Jesus the Son of God, who fent 'em, and confirmed all their Proceedings with Signs and Wonders following. So very little Reason had this Author to pretend or Insinuate, That the Apostles when fent from God to Propagate and Establish Christianity, acted in their Sacred Ministry, and in the Gathering, Establishment, and Government of the Church, only upon the Principles of Natural Right, and without any Jurisdiction or Authority from God.

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I shall have occasion to speak more particularly to some of these things in the sequel of this Discourse; and therefore at the present I shall only take leave to illustrate the force of these Reasonings, and to shew the Vanity of this Author's Pretences, from the very Nature of the Christian Church, according to its first and Primitive Institution. What then is the Nature of that Church whose Divine Rights are now in Dispute? I take it to be a Society of Men called of God by the Gospel of Christ from the rest of the World into a peculiar Covenant of Grace and Reconciliation, with a Promise of Eternal Life upon the Conditions of Faith, Repentance, and serving God, according to the Rules and Precepts of the Gospel. There is, I think, nothing in this Definition, or Description of a Christian Church, but what must be allowed, from what has been already faid, to be Essential to the Nature of it. They are called by Preaching, separated by Baptism, without which none are to be admitted: They that thus Believe, and are Baptized, do in that enter into Covenant with God, to Worship him, and renounce to all Idolatry; and upon their faithful performance of those Conditions, have a Promise of, and are by it Entitled to Eternal Life and Happiness. From all which we may observe, I. That

1. That nothing was more necessary in the Original Institution and Establishment of fuch a Society, than a Divine Commission and Authority in its first Preachers and Ministers in all the Offices thereunto belonging. On this depends, not only the Truth of our Religion, but the Power of our Preaching, the validity of our Sacraments, the certain acceptableness of our Worship; the Divine Right of our Incorporation into one Society or Mystical Body, with a full affurance of the Goodness of every thing that we do in Christianity. Take away this, and then the Christian Church is indeed, as our Author would have it, of no better Authority than any Private Affemblies, or Glubs. And all its Actions, Ordinances and Proceedings, not only as to its Ministers and Government, but even as to the most Holy Offices of Christian Worship, will then appear meer Human Constitutions, Revocable at pleasure, and have no Divine Authority or Obligation in them. But as the Divine Commission undeniably given to the Apostles, will not, by any means, admit of that: So the very Nature of the Offices to be performed in the Christian Church, sufficiently attest the necessity of a Divine Power in the Persons executing those Offices, and 2 Divine Institution of their Ministry.

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Ex. gr. If Preaching be not only Instructing Mankind in the things they were ignorant of, but also Inviting 'em in God's Name into a State of Favour and Reconciliation: Then, as St. Paul fays, How (ball they Preach Rom. x. 15. unless they be fent, and have Authority from God to treat thus with his People? And if the Persons thus Instructed and Converred. are by Baptism to be admitted into an Actual, the Conditional Covenant of Grace and Mercy; This must necessarily suppose a Divine Authority and Power in the Persons Executing and Ratifying fuch folemn Covenants in God's Name. In that no Body can make valid Contracts and obliging Stipulations for Almighty God, without a Divine Commission and Authority from him so to do. Again, if the Persons thus admitted. are found still under the Government and Authority of those Apostles by whose means they were perswaded and Converted: Then, I think, it cannot be denied, but that the Christian Church appears, thus far at least to have begun and had its Original Establishment, not only by this pretended Natural Right of its first Believers and Profestors; but by a Divine Charter, or Commission from Heaven, in the Hands of an Establish'd Ministry of God's own Divine Appointment and Institution. Let me add,

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2. That that very Divine Commission by which the Apostles and Pastors were authorised and empowred to Preach, and to Baptize, and thereby to lay the Foundation of the Christian Church was, and still is a sufficient Power and Authority to the Believers of this Gospel, of Associating and Assembling together for the publick Worsship of God, and of Incorporating into one Body to that end. It must be so, or else their Preaching carries no binding Obliga-

tion at all in it.

Those who heard this Gospel, were as much bound to Believe it, as the Apofiles themselves were to Preach it. And those who Heard, and Believed it, were as much obliged to Renounce to the Idolatrous Worship of the Pagan World, and by Baptism to enter themselves into the Church of God. And those Miraculous Operations, by which the Apostles gave Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion: attested also their Divine Power in Preaching and calling Disciples; and also a Divine Authority to the People so Convinced and Converted, to Assemble and Associate together for the Worship of God, according to the Doctrins of Christ. And this induced me to fay above, That the Christian Church hereby becomes a Divine Society in a more eminent Sense, and in a more extraordinary manner,

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Manner, than any other Society now upon Earth whatever. In that the Apostles and Primitive Christians did not proceed, as this Author vainly pretends, upon the Natural Rights and Liberties alone: but the Gospel of Christ, upon the Divinity of which, the certain Truth and Divine Authority of our whole Religion stands, is the Authentick Charter of this Society, and the

Divine Warrant of its Incorporation.

What Power the People, or feveral Members of the Christian Church have in the Government or Ministry thereof, and in the Ordinances and Constitutions of Discipline thereunto belonging, is another Question that must be determined by the Charter of this Divine Society, the Holy Scriptures. And of this I shall speak in its proper Place. Our present Business only was, to evince the falfeness of this Author's first bold Insinuation with respect to Church-Government, viz. That the Apostles were Commisfioned only to declare God's Will, and that then they left the People to themselves, and to their Natural Rights and Liberties, in affociating and framing themselves into a Church. according to their own Prudential Rules and Constitutions. For the confutation of which false Pretence I have shewn, and I hope, with fufficient clearness, that the Apostles Commission was not only to Declare God's

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Will, and thereby to Perswade and Convince the People, but also to Incorporate them and to Establish the Christian Church, as God's own Society, fet apart for his solemn and publick Worship, according to the Laws and Precepts of the Gospel. And that as Preaching, Administration of the Sacraments, Ordination of Ministers, making Constitutions and Decrees for Government and Discipline, and the like, are the chief Offices and and Infrances of Power in fuch a Society: So these were done in the first beginnings of the Christian Church, either by the Apostles themselves, or else under their Guidance and Direction. And that the very Nature of the Offices to be performed, and that constant Direction of the Holy Ghost, under which the Apostles appear to have acted, thew, that these were not acts of meer Prudential Counfel and Advice, but parts of that Apostolick Office and facred Ministry to which they were of God Ordained and Appointed. From hence we may observe,

3. In what confifts the Independency of this Society from that of the State, and what is the true Foundation of it. It is not a Power to Lord it over God's Inheritance, and to put a check to Imperial Princes in the Government of their Subjects, by the encroaching Sanctions of a Pragmatical Priesthood,

Priestbood, as this Author in his abundant Civility loves to speak; but a Power from God to invite Mankind into a State of Reconciliation; to admit their Profelytes into a folemn Covenant of Mercy and Salvation, and to incorporate them into one Body for his folemn Worship, according to his own Rules and Laws.

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So that the diffinction of this Power and its Independency from the Civil Magistrate and State, are undeniably evident from the Original Spring and Sourse of it. If in a National Church there was no Authority but what was originally from the Magistrate as the Truffee of the People, fo that the Ordination of Ministers, the Administration of the Sacraments, &c. were from him; and if according to the Laws of the Gospel, no Divine Offices could be rightly performed but by a Commission from him: Then indeed, no Independent Privileges or Claims, could in Reason be prerended to. But when infread of this, we find its Original Establishment franding wholly upon another Foot; form'd in another way; and deriving its Authority and Power in another Channel, in which the Civil Magistrate was not confulted, nor had recourse to; but often withftood and opposed it: I know not what can be called, if this cannot, an evident proof, That the Christian Church in its Original C 4 EstaEstablishment was, (and if it continues the same Fountain of its Power) still is a Distinct Society, and separate from the State; and, as need shall require, must in the Holy Offices and Ministry of the Christian

Worship, be independent on it.

How Reconcilable this is with the undoubted Supremacy of the Civil Magistrate, I have promised to shew hereafter. In the mean while, if our Adversaries in this point, will but Honestly and Impartially enough distinguish between the true Nature of this Mystical Body of Christ, the Church, and that of all other Societies whatfoever; how this was first begun by the Apostles, who are confessed to have had a Divine Commisfion from Heaven; and how the feveral Members of this Society are admitted into Covenant with God, and Entitled by it, and by their Incorporation into it, with fingular Privileges and Promises from God: They must needs fee the Absurdity of pretending to erect fuch a Society as this upon meer Natural Rights alone. Has any Man a Natural Right to a Miraculous Dispensation of undeferved Mercy? To a Divine Call from Heaven? To the Communications of the Holy Ghost? And to a Covenant of Grace? Tis true, Religion is not to be forced upon Men, and so their consent is necessarily supposed, in order to a due admission. this

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Founded on a Divine Commission.

this does not exclude the Divine Authority of their Charter; as the claim of Natural Right alone does. The founding the Christian Church therefore only upon this Natural Liberty of framing themselve sinto such a Society, as we find endow'd with fuch Divine Advantages; is to me so great a Mystery: That in my Apprehension, a Man may as well pretend a Natural Right to become an Angel; as to become a Member of Christ, a Child of God, in a Covenant of Grace, or to Erect a Society, or Community, for the obtaining these Advantages from God, without a Divine Commission and Authority from him fo to do. And to shew you that I am not fingular in this Notion of these Things, let me give the Sentiments of Ignatius, one of the most Primitive Apostolic Fathers and Martyrs. Who was fo far from thinking of founding the Church by Natural Right alone, that he writes thus. As the Lord did nothing without the Father, being united to him, neither by himself, nor by his Apostles, so neither do ye any ign. ad thing without your Bishop and Presbyters, nor at- Magnes. tempt any thing as appearing Rational to your ad Trall. selves apart. Let all Reverence the Deacons as S. 3. Jesus Christ, the Bisbop as the Father, the Presbyters as the Sanhedrim of God, and College of Apostles. Without these there is no Christian Church.

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Church. Which plainly shews by what Authority the Church began, and the Apostles acted in the first Institution of it. All which will be more plain in clearing the second Thing that Pproposed.

CHAP. II.

Shewing the Continuance of the Christian Churches Divine Charter and Power in the Hands of an Instituted Ministry.

What has been faid above, was with a more particular Respect to the first Beginning or Incorporating of the Christian Church, that it was not, as is vainly alledg'd, by the Peoples framing themselves into a Society merely by virtue of their Natural Rights and Liberties; but by a Divine Commission, or Charter deliver'd to the Apostles; and wholly under their Direction, as a part of their Sacred Ministerial Function and Apostolic Office. I am now to shew

II. That as the Christian Church thus first began, so it continued by that Divine Commission or Charter in the Hands of a

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fettled Ministry of Divine Institution. To make this good the Reader must consider

only intended by Jesus Christ to continue for ever: But, that he particularly Promised, and Stipulated for its continuance; and Declared and Pronounced its Perpetuity; when he told St. Peter. Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not pre-18. wail against it. Nothing I think being more clear, than that those Words affirm the lasting Continuance of the Christian Church throughout all Ages, notwithstanding all the most violent Opposition that by Men or

Devils can be made against it.

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2. That with the continuance of the Church as a Divine Society, there must of necessity be a continuance also of the same Divine Power, and Authority by which it first began. Without this it ceases to be a Christian Church according to Christ's original Institution. And the Members of it are no longer entitled thereby to those Divine Privileges and Bleffed Advantages, that upon its first Incorporation were annex'd to it. Nor is there then any thing Sacred or Holy in its Inftitution. Thus its Preachers can have no Authority to make Disciples in God's Name. Its Members are no longer the Children of God; no longer in Covenant with him by Baptifm; no longer entitled by

it to the Graces of the Spirit. But the whole Degenerates into a mere Human Institution, fit in all things, as our Author would have it, to be Managed and Ministred in by any Civil Authority or Power. This must needs be, if the Apostles Divine Authority in Gathering, and Incorporating, and Settling the Church, was indeed to their Persons on-

ly, and expir'd with them.

It was this Divine Authority and Power by the Charter of the Gospel committed to them, that first made the difference between this and other Assemblies; that constituted it in the beginning a Divine Society, and endow'd it with all the facred Privileges and divine Advantages which it then had. As long as this continues, and it still acts by this Charter, it is still a Divine Society, and a Church of God. But whenever that original Commission ceases, and the Divine Authority of its Incorporation expires; it is then no longer a Christian Church, no longer the mystical Body of Christ. The continuance of that, necessarily and incontestably suppofes the continuance and lasting Force of that Divine Commission, by which at first it became a Church. From whence, I think, I may observe again,

3. That there is the same Reason for the continuance of the Divine Power and Authority of the Preachers and Ministers of the as

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the Gospel, that there is for the continuance of the Society. And that on these two Accounts.

r. That the Society cannot be continu'd without a continuance of those DivineOffices by which it subsists. The constant and publick Exercise of which was one great End and Reason of its Incorporation. And

2. That these Divine Offices cannot be duly and regularly Perform'd, without a Divine Authority in the Ministers officiating therein. Or in other Words, but by Ministers of certain divine Institution and Appointment. The first of these two Observations I think wants no enlargement; the latter I shall prove as I have done already, from the very Nature of the Divine Offices to be perform'd, viz. Preaching, Baptizing, Administring the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, ore.

First, as to Preaching, it is not barely, as our Author infinuates, Instructing the Ignorant, and Treaching, and Admonishing Men in their Duty, which I confess every one has a natural Right and Obligation to, as well as a Priest, tho' he more abundantly. But it is as was said before, Treating with the People in God's Name; Calling them by his Authority; Inviting them into Covenant with him; and also making them in God's Name, and by his Commission, solemn Pro-

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mises of Peace, and Mercy, and eternal Life. Now they who have sufficient Authority to do all this, may well be look'd upon and Stiled the Ministers of God, and Embassadors of Christ. And tho' this Author is pleas'd to ridicule the Distinction between preaching Page 135: Charitatively (as he calls it, when any one

Man of common Right, and out of Loveand

Rom. X. 15.

Charity instructs another) and Authoritatively, when Men speak as Persons sent by Almighty God to proclaim his Will: Yet he has not yet shew'd himself able to confute that Diffinction. He could not but be fenfible, that it was an Authoritative Preaching that St. Paul intended, when he Expostulates, How shall they Hear without a Preacher. and how shall they Preach unless they be sent? To call Men from the rest of the World, and invite 'em in God's Name to become their Profelytes, is fuch an Authoritative Office, that I do not fee how any one should dare to presume upon his Leave and Appro-

Especially too, when we consider that this Preaching is indeed in its first Institution and End, a previous Office to the Administration of the Holy Sacraments; and as intended to invite Men into Covenant with God, supposes the Person's Preaching to have Power to execute their Commission, and

bation to it; without some Evidence of a Di-

vine Commission and Authority from him.

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Men. According to the Evangelical Doctrin of the Sacraments, they are Seals of God's Covenant, and Pledges of his Stipulation.

Baptism is the solemn Ratification of it, to every individual Person that becomes a Christian, and that is admitted into the Church of Christ by it; by which he is made a Member of that mystical Body, a Child of God, with a promise of sanctifying Grace; and on condition of keeping his baptismal

Vow, entituled to eternal Life.

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And the Lord's Supper is also a federal Act of Christian Worship, whereby we have the Benefits of that Death which we commemorate, exhibited; and divine Grace administred to our devout and penitent Souls. This St. Paul teaches us, by calling this Cup of Bleffing, the Communion of the Blood of 16. Christ; and the Bread thus broken, the Communion of his Body: By which must be meant, a Communication of the Benefits of his Death and Passion. Now who can pretend to do all this for God and Christ, without a Power from them? Who shall make Covenants, and Contracts, and binding Stipulations for the Almighty King of Heaven; And yet have no Commission from him so to do? I the more cheerfully infift on this Argument, in that I have our Adversary, as to this

this point, openly declaring himself in favour of it. If, fays he, he who feigns a Commission from an Earthly Prince, and acts as his Embassador without having Authority from him, Page 97 deserves a severe Punishment : What must they expect who falfly pretend a Commission from Heaven, and to be no less than the Embassadors of God to Men? I readily join with him in his sense of this Matter, and confess that they deserve severe Punishment from God. But then as the very Nature of the Christian Church, and the divine Offices to be perform'd in it, plainly prove the necessity of fuch a Divine Authority in all true regular Gospel Ministers: I would not have this Author too violently to defend, that all Christians in common have a Right to fuch a Priesthood. In that,

4. As the Nature of the Divine Offices of the Christian Church, shew the necessity of a Divine Institution and Authority in its Ministers; so we have very good Reason to believe, and very good Arguments to prove, that God at first settled this Ministry upon upon such a foot, on a Set of Men, to be Continu'd in them, and by them to be transmitted to suture Ages. It was undeniably thus in the Jewish Church, and by the Law of Moses. And this methinks must have some force to the Purpose now in hand. The Institution, I say, of a distinct Order

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of Men by God's own Ordinance and Appointment, to Minister in Holy Things in that Mosaic Dispensation, which was so peculiarly intended by God himself, to be the Type and Figure of the Christian; is at least a presumptive Argument on our side. One would rather expect an establish'd Miniftry of divine Institution, settled on a distinct Order of Men, in that more perfect and glorious Dispensation which is to continue forever: Then under that which was only a temporary Type and Figure of the other. Especially too, when in the Nature of Things, and according to the Purport and Intention of the feveral Institutions and Duties: There is much more reason for such a Distinct Order of the Ministry in the Christian Church than in the Jewish. Those therefore should methinks consider this well, who make the very fame plaufible Pretences, and Pleas now against the Divine Institution of the Evangelical Priesthood or Ministry, that were once made under, and against the Levitical. And which yet succeeded so ill then, and met with fuch fingular and extraordinary Evidences of God's Displeasure and Vengeance: That one would have thought it should have prevented the like extravagant Attempts under the Gofpel.

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What a fairer Pretence had Uzzah to excuse his Rashness than what any can now D plead 2 Sam.

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plead for themselves, who Officiously thrust themselves into God's Ministry without his Authority? Might not he have truly faid, that every Jew had an Interest in the Ark of God, the Symbol of his Presence and Favour, as well as the Sons of Aaron? But especially that being a Levite, whose Office it was to carry the Ark on their Shoulders, he could have no reason to Apprehend any Guilt, or Danger in touching it? Especially too in a time of Danger, when the Reason and Principle of that Action was only a Zeal for the Prefervation of the Ark? These, you see, are Fair Speeches and Plaulible Reafonings; and yet when we reflect on the Wretched End of Uzzah, and find him struck with Immediate Death for fretching out his Arm, or Hand to fave the Ark : It shews how Tremendous the Presence of our God is, and how Dangerous to be Officious in his Service beyond what his Laws and Precepts and Divine Institutions will admit. Let our Adversaries think of this Matter well, and Reafon upon it, and tell us what Construction is most naturally to be made of it.

Again, what were the Pretentions of Followers of Corab, when they mutiny'd against Moses and Aaron, but the very Pretentions of this Author? A complaint of their claiming a Divine Right to their Holy

Num. 16. Office and Function. To take too much upon

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you, seeing all the Congregation are Holy every one of them, as well as you, and the Lord is among them. Wherefore then lift you up your Selves above the Congregation of the Lord? What is this but our Author's Sense in other Words, that a Pretence to the Priesthood not in common to all Christians, is no small piece of page 109. PRIESTCRAFT? And yer, God did not only confute these vain Pretenders by a miraculous Vindication of Mofes's and Aaron's Authority, in building and bloffoming of their Rod: But by the Severity of his Vengeance against the Trangresfors, by causing the Earth to Open and to Swallow em up, so that they went down slive into the Pit, and the Earth clos a upon them, and they Perished from among the Congregation. These are fuch inflances of God's severe Judgments in a Church originally delign'd, to be a Type and Figure of the Christian, as should be well consider'd. And when they are, they should methinks A waken all Men, and make 'em very Cautious of Usurping upon any Sacred Function, and taking Holy Offices upon them, without a good Affurance of the legality of their Call, and of God's Approbation of it.

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And that even the Supreme Civil Magiftrate may not pretend any better claim in this Matter than the meanest of the People:

The Case of Uzziah King of Judah, who 2 Chron.

D 2 invading 25. 16.

invading the Priest's Office, and attempting to burn Incense upon the Altar, became Leprous immediately, and continu'd a Leper unto the Day of his Death, as a Punishment for that Sin, gives us sufficient Instruction.

And has God now, with breaking down the Partition Wall between Jews and Gentiles, so broken thro' the Antient Constitutions of that old Law, that there are no settled Orders of Men appointed in the Christian Church to Minister in Holy Things? Are all those Statutes and Ordinances disannull'd? All those Fences and Provisions now so thrown open, that all the People of God are Prophets? All equally entitled to the Ministry in Sacred Offices, without any particular Solemn Designation, or Call and Authority from God? So far from this, that I think it a great Confirmation of what has been already said, to obeserve,

ble to the Nature and Constitution of the Society; to the Offices to be Perform'd in it, and to that Dispensation by which it was prefigured: Is agreeable also to the Commission given to the Apostles, and to their Proceedings and Practices thereupon, and to the Practices of those who received Authority from them, as deliver'd in Scripture, and the most Antient and Authentic Ecclesiastical Writings. To make all this Good, there

are

are three or four Things to be consider'd.

I. That the Commission given to the Apostles for Gathering and Settling the Christian Church was not merely Personal, and Peculiar to themselves alone, and that was to dye with them: But a Lasting Charter to be continu'd down to their Successors, and fo to be transmitted by Succession to the End of the World. This appears plain enough from two places of Scripture, that when compared together can scarce have any other tolerable meaning put upon them. The first is this, As the Disciples were Assembled toge. fob. 20. ther the first Day of the Week for Fear of the 19. Jews; Jesus came and stood in the midst of them, and said Peace be unto you, -- as my Father hath fent me so send I you, And when he had said this, he Breathed on 'em, and said Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever Sins ye Remit, they are Remitted unto them, and who foever Sins ye Retain they are Retained. The other is that foremention'd place, Matt. xxviii. 17, 18, 19. where just before his Ascension into Heaven, he declares himself thus to the Apostles. All Power is given unto me both in Heaven and on Earth; Go ye therefore, and Teach all Nations, or make Disciples of all Nations, and Baptize them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe what soever I command you; and lo I Am

am with you always, even unto the End of the World. In which Words it is I think very plainly fignified; that Christ received from the Father all that Power and Authority both in Heaven and on Earth, which could be requir'd to the Completing our Redemption, and Gathering to himself a Church thereupon. That the Power which he received on Earth to that end, he committed to the Apostles, giving them Authority by Preaching, Baptizing, &c. to Erect and Incorporate this Society. As the Father fent me so send I you. Munus suum, tanquam legatione Perfunctus, resignat Apostolis, quos vicarios suos facit. Says the Learned Vossius. Harm. Evangel. p. 398. Having finished the Work that was appointed for him to do, he resigns bis Offices to the Apostles, and Constitutes them bis Substitutes. And when he declares. Lo I am with you alway even unto the End of the World: Those Words that cannot literally nor reasonably be true of the Apostles own Persons, must, I think, of Necessity, be ascrib'd to their Perpetual Successors. No. fays our Author, for,

ther than Authorising, or Requiring them to teach Nations to observe all Things that he had commanded them. So that the Apostles were sent by Christ as he was by God, not to do their own Will, but his that sent them, i.e. to declare what

Page 163.

what they had seen and heard. That is, he will allow the Apostles Commission to Teach, and Preach and Declare God's Will, and Perswade the People: But not to have any settled Office, Power, or Authority in, or about the Church. I have answered to this Matter in part already; by shewing above that the Commission given was to Execute God's Will in Founding and Incorporating this Church, as well as in Preaching and Persuading Men to come into it. And therefore need not repeat here what has been

faid before. Well but fays he again,

2. This was a Promise only to the Apostles themselves, and therefore it is unnatural to extend that to other Perfons, in the Performing of which they could have no Successors. But I anfwer, that if the Apostles appear by Virtue of their Commission, to have Ordain'd others to the Ministry as well as to Minister themselves: Then it must be granted that they understood this as Deriving Authority to them and their Successors. So that here can be no Mistake unless these bold Writers will charge it upon the Apostles. And to defend em from fo vile an Imputation, the Words of St. Matthew plainly import thus much. am with you alway, even to the End of the World. For tho' our Author that we are now engaged with, would suggest, That this can signify only to the end of that Age, as such like Expressions Persons in Scripture extend no farther than the Persons they are spoken to: Yet this is a trisling Evalion. For as it is Unnatural to make that Promise only personal, which in the Persons of those alone to whom it is made can never be personmed, unless those Men were to live to the end of the World: So I defy this Author, and all his Abettors to find me out in all the Scripture, a Personal Promise made to any Man, or Set of Men, that, extending to their Persons alone, is made in such Expressions as this, always to the end of the World. Well, says he again, but

3. If this must be extended to all Ages yet why to the Clergy, and not rather to the Church or Body of Christians? Is Christ more with them than with the Laity? And have not the Lay as well as the Clergy the Promise of the Spirit? I answer to these Questions by asking in myturn, Why Christ gave this Commission and this Promise to the Apostles and not to the whole Body of the Disciples? So it was that, the Eleven Disciples went away into Galilee, into a Mountain where Jesus had Appointed them.

Matt. 28. to a Mountain where Jesus had Appointed them.

And Jesus came and spake unto them say-

plainly shews that the Authority and Commission of Preaching and Baptising was not committed to the whole Body of Christians in common, but to the Apostles only and those who acted by Commission under them.

And

And this too as plainly shews, that the Promise annex'd to this Commission was to the Apostles and Ministers, and not to the whole Body of the Church. Had it been only a Promise of sanctifying Grace which all Christians indeed stand in need of, then it had been plain, that it had belong'd in common to all Christians. But when it evidently imports only a continuance of the Divine Authority of the Commission to Preach and Baptize, &c. which was given to the Apostles and Ministers alone: There can, I think, be no doubt to whom it is Appropriated. However our Author has one Scruple more, viz.

4. That if we suppose the Promise made to the Page 164. Clergy alone, yet why must these Words import any more than God's Peculiar Care and Watchful Providence over them? Why must a Right to govern the Church by way of Succession from the Apostles, with a Power to Communicate it to others, be included in these Expressions? I anfwer again, because the Apostles themselves appear undeniably so to have understood them, and so to have practis'd upon them. They understood them as establishing a perpetual Continuance of their Divine Commiffion or Charter, in the Hands of a fettled and divinely instituted Ministry, by Succession to the end of the World. And accordingly, they did not only perform Divine Offices themthemselves, but Appointed and Ordained others to that purpose. And this is the

II. Second Thing to be consider'd with respect to the Apostle's Power and Practice in the first Establishment of the Christian Church. That as they received Divine Power and Authority from God to Gather him a Church, and Incorporate it by Preaching. Baptizing, and other fuch like Christian Offices: So in the Churches thus gathered, they did by the same Divine Authority, fix a settled Ministry to Minister to God and Officiate in Divine Offices under them. This I think I shall be able to make good as to the feveral Orders still continu'd in the Church of Christ. I will begin first with that of Presbyters, as that within the Order of Time feems to lye first before us. Let the Reader then be pleafed to take Notice.

I. That when the Apostles had converted Disciples and erected Churches in any Places. they did not, as our Author would infinuate. leave them wholly to their own Conduct and Guidance in the performance of Holy Offices, and appointing Ministers for that Purpose: But did Appoint and Ordain Presbyters, who in their Absence should Perform those Offices and take Care of the new Converted Churches, and under whose Directions all Things pursuant to the Apostle's In-

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fructions were to be manag'd. This is plain enough from Holy Scripture. St. Luke in his History of the Acts of the Apostles, having related what Success St. Paul and Barnabas had by their Preaching the Gospel at Derbe and Lystra, and Iconium, Cities of Lyca- Alls 14. onia, and at Antioch. He adds, And when they had Ordained them ELDERS in every Church, and had Prayed with Fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed Where we find that the Ordaining Elders in every Church was one part of the Apostles Care, and Provision for them, before they could think fit to leave them and proceed to their Apostolick Office in other Places. The Word which we translate Elders, should in my Opinion have been render'd Presbyters. in that its plain from other Scriptures that speak of 'em, that its a Word of Office and Function, and does not respect their Age only.

I know very well that some of our Divines are of Opinion, That these Elders placed in every City, were not of the second Order of Church Ministers whom we call Presbyters, but of the first which we call Bishops. But as Presbyters are a distinct Order as Anciently as Bishops, so the word, when denoting the Sacred Function, does in my opinion not seem so well to savour that Construction. Nor indeed does our Zeal

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for the Divine or Apostolic Institution of Episcopacy need to carry us on thus far. In that I think, we have proof enough of that in other places and from other Expressions, without infifting too Rigorously on this.

Taking then these Elders for common Presbyters, I must farther observe, That alrhough this is, I think, the first time that we meet with an express Relation of their Ordination, yet this was not the first beginning of 'em; But that they were in other Churches as well as in these, and indeed in all, feems to me very plain from feveral places in Scripture. Particularly, when the Disciples at Antioch had gathered Relief for the Christians in Judea against the Famine that had been foretold: They fent it to the Elders by the Hands of Barnabas and Paul. When these two Apostles came to Ferusalem about the Question of Circumcifing the converted Gentiles, it's faid, That they were received of the Church, and of the Ads 15 4. Apostles and Elders. And again, the Apostles and Elders came together about this matter. And upon their Determination it is faid,; It pleased the Apostles and Elders with the whole Church. And they wrote Letters to the Church at Antioch after this manner; The Apostles, Elders and Brethren, Send Greeting, &c. And these Decrees are said to have

been Ordained of the Apostles and Elders that

were at Jerusalem. St. Paul in his Voyage towards Jerusalem from Miletus, Sent to E- 20. 17. phesus, and called for the Elders of the Church. And after a most Affectionate Discourse to em about the Zeal and Constancy which he had shewed in the discharge of his Apostolic Office among them, he addresses himfelf thus. Take heed therefore unto your selves, 28. and to the Flock over which the Holy Gboft has made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he purchased with his own Blood. The same Apostle in his Epistle to Timothy, gives this Advice, Rebuke not an Elder, but I Tim. v.t. intreat him as a Father. And that this is for his Office or Function fake, is plain from other words in the same Chapter. Let the 17. Elders that Rule well be counted worthy of double Honour, especially they that labour in the Word and Doctrin. And I would beg this Author who is fo Opinionated that the Poverty of the Clergy is the only fecurity of Religion, to confider, that the double Honour there mentioned has respect to the Recompence and Reward of his Labour. This is plain from what follows immediately. For the Scripture faith, Thou balt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the Corn, and the Labourer is worthy of his hire. After which he also adds; Against an Elder receive not anv. 19. Accusation, but before two or three Witnesses. And as a still farther Evidence of the Apo**ftolic**

46 The Divine Institution of the

stolic Establishment of this Order in the Church of Christ: the same Apostle tells Titus. That he left him at Crete for this cause.

that he should set in order the things that are wanting, and Ordain Elders in every City, as he had appointed him. I will add but one place more, and it's that of St. James. Is any Sick among you, let him call for the Elders of the Church and let them Pray over him, anointing him with Oil in the Name of the Lord, and the Prayer of Faith shall fave the Sick. Now I say, if the word Elder were but changed for Prsbyter, (as of right it should be:) Here is methinks such numerous Evidence, such clear proof of the Early Apostolick Institution of Presbyters in the Christian Church, that nothing can be plainer. Espe-

cially if we confider,

1. The Divine Offices to which they were Ordain'd. It was in General, and under the Apostles direction to be Overseers of the Church, as that word fignifies Rulers and Directors, and Guides, in teaching People the way of Salvation, and performing the Divine Offices of Christian Worship. Accordingly they were exhorted to Feed the Church of God, the very Charge given by our Saviour to St. Peter, and by the word wornains,

Jo. 20, 16, that denotes Government or Keeping, as well as Feeding the Flock, and so must denote the Holy Office of the Christian Ministry

nistry. They are such as Laboured in the Word and Doctrin, and who in the faithful discharge of their Function, are said to Rule well. They are such as were to be called in to visit the Sick, and to Pray over them. They are such as were called in by the Apostles themselves into Consultations and Debates about Important Matters: And their Determinations and the Authority of them run jointly in their Names. Ordained by the Apoftles and Elders. They were by the Apostles own Practice and Appointment to be ordained in every Church; to be Honoured as Fathers. to be counted worthy of double Honour, and Rewarded for their labour in the Miniftry.

2. That the Apostles thus Appointing and Ordaining Presbyters in every Church, may not be look'd on only as acting by their Prudential Council and Advice, but by the Authority of God, and in pursuance of their Divine Commission delivered to them: It is faid expresly, that the Holy Ghoft had made them Overfeers. Words that cannot be fairly and rationally accounted for, but by fuppoling that Bleffed Spirit to Countenance, and Favour and Approve, and Confirm their Proceedings. As indeed he oftentimes did, by the Miraculous Gifts and Powers that attended the Apostles imposition of Hands in the Ordination of Gospel Ministers. Of which

which we have fufficient intimation, in two remarkable places of St. Paul's Epiftles

2 Tim. 1.7.

1 7im. 4. to Timothy. Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of Hands of the Presbytery. And again, Stir up the Gift of God which is in thee, by putting on of my Hands. And nothing methinks can be more Odd and Abfurd, and Unreasonable, than to suppose, The Holy Ghost by his Miraculous Gifts and Operations, to confirm those actions that were only of Prudential Council and Advice, and had no just Obligation or Authority in them. Such Miraculous Attestation, seems rather to belong to Ordinances of Divine Institution and Authority.

> If this may be allowed, as I hope it must be, a good Testimony of the Divine Apostolic Institution of Presbyters in the Church of Christ, Ministring by Divine Authority from him: I proceed to shew,

2. That besides Presbyters, there was another Order also, that of Deacons Ordained and fettled in every Church, to Minister to the Apostles and Presbyters in the performance of Divine Offices. The first Institution of Deacons in the Church of Christ, every Body that knows any thing of these matters, believes to have been upon that occasion which is related in the fixth Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. But because donbly

cause our Author is willing from the first occasion of their Institution, to bring 'em down to the degree of Common Overseers of the Poor, without any regard to their Ministry in the Sacred Offices of Christian Worship: It cannot be improper to speak a little more particularly to this matter, and to shew from Scripture and Antiquity, what the true Nature of their Holy Function was.

Now, tho' its true, that the first Ordaining them was for the daily administration to the Poor: Yet that they were Originally intended for a further Ministry also in Divine Offices, and as a distinct holy Order in the Christian Church, is plain on several

accounts.

1. From the Qualifications of the Men Alls 6. 3. directed to be chosen into this Office, Men of Honest Report, full of the Haly Ghost and of Wisdom; i.e. says Grotius, Men endued with In loc. excellent Gifts. With Miraculous Powers, fitting them for the service of the Church when they should be called to it, says Dr. Hammond. And as to their other Qualifications, it is to be particularly taken notice of, that St. Paul himfelf requires in a manner the very fame for Deacons that he does for Bishops. Likewise 1 Tim. 3. must the Deacons be Grave, not Double-Tongued, 8,9, &c. not given to much Wine, no greedy of fil-thy Lucre, holding the Mystery of the Faith in a pure Conscience. And let these also first be proved noilsa

proved, then let them use the Office of a Deas con, being found blameless. Let the Deacons be the Husbands of one Wife, ruling their Children and their own Houses well. For they that have used the Office of a Deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree. Now methinks these are such strict Qualifications as seem intended Peculiarly to adorn the the Sacred Mini-

ftry of the Church. But 2. That Deacons were delign'd to be a

diffinct Order of the Gospel Ministry or Clergy is farther proved from their Ordination by the Imposition of the Apostles Alls 6. 3. Hands. Brethren, look out among you feven men of honest Report, full of the Holy Ghost, and Wisdom, whom we may appoint over this Business. And they fet them beforethe Apostles, and when they had Prayed, they laid Hands on them, and thus their Election and Ordination to their Sacred Office were finished. And what can we think of or call fuch a Function to which Men were Appointed by the Apostles themfelves, by Solemu Prayer and Impolition of Hands? I shall speak more largely in another place, of the difference between the People's Election and the Apostles Ordination. I only take notice at prefent, that altho' the Impetition of Hands was used on more accounts than one, yet that this was that known Rite by which the Apostles did usually Appoint and make a Solemn Defignation

nation of Men to the Sacred Ministry of the Church. So usually and so Universally, that I am verily perswaded, that the sharpest of our Adversaries with all their Observation, cannot produce me one single Instance in all the New Testament, of any Person or Persons ordained to any Office by imposition of the Apostles Hands: But that Office has in all Ages of the Church been accounted a Sacred, Ministerial, Clerical Function of the Church, of Divine Institution, and with a known Authority in the Holy Offices of Preaching and Baptising. And this is the

3. Third Evidence of Deacons being a Sacred Order of the Christian Clergy, viz. The Holy Offices which they are found to have performed. St. Stephen full of Faith and Alls 6. 8. Power did great Wonders and Miracles among 10. the People. Infomuch that when certain of the Synagogue of the Libertines and Cyrenians, &c. rose up to Dispute against Stephen, who had Preached Jesus Christ, they were not able to refift the Wisdom and the Spirit by which he Spake. And in the next Chapter we find him not only ferving Tables, but preaching to his People, and fealing the truth of his Do-Etrin by his Blood. Philip, one of thefe. Seven, is Als 21.8. nor only expresly called an Evangelist, by rea. fon of his Preaching and applying himself by Doctrins and Miracles to call Profelytes into the Church: But we have also some account given

given of his Proceedings therein. Soon after his being ordained Deacon, he went down to the City of Samaria and preached Christ unto them, --- and when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were Baptized both Men and Women. And by whom can ye think Baptized, but by him who had first Preached to them? And Simon Magus bimself believed also, and when he was Baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondred, behold-ing the Miracles and Signs which were done. And afterwards when he was fent by the Holy Ghost to convert the Æthiopian Eunuch, he opened his Mouth and began at the 35. Prophecy of Esaias, which the Eunuch was then reading, and Preached unto him Jesus. 38. And when the Man Believed, they went down both into the Water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he Baptized him. And afterwards being 400 found at Azotus and paffing through, he Preached in all the Cities till be came to Cesarea. What better Evidence can any Man desire to prove the Deaconship a Sacred Order of the Christian Ministry or Clergy? Especially when all this is again confirmed 4. And Laftly. By the concurrent Sense and Testimony of the most Primitive and

> Apostolick Writings; which in cases of this Nature are by no means to be lightly esteem-

St. Paul directs his Epistle to the Phi-

lippians, To all the Saints in Jesus Christ which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons. An Order methinks this last is which he would have taken no notice of, had they not been of some account in the Sacred Mini-

stry of the Church.

But there is nothing I think more Appofite to this purpose than the repeated mention which in all our Apostolick and Primitive Writers are made of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, as the fetled established Orders of Divine Ministry in the Church of Christ, to whose Spiritual Guidance and Direaion all Christians were commanded and oblig'd to be subject. I will not transcribe the particular Places now, in that I intend to lay them all before the Reader to be perused at one View by and by, in testimony of the Primitive Ecclefiastick Ministry. I will only now tell him, that Bishops, Priests and Deacons, are mentioned no less than Sixteen times in feven short Epistles, by Ignarius the Apostolick Martyr, as the Persons under whose Direction and Authority all Ecclesiastical Matters were to be ordered, and to whose Spiritual Guidance all Christians are in a most Affectionate manner perswaded and exhorted to submit. In which such Expressions are used of Deacons as were particularly intended to teach the People to esteem 'em, not only as the Overseers of their E 3 Poor The Divine Institution of the

6. 6. ad Trall. 5. 2, 3. ad Philad. Superfc. & S. 4. ad Smyrn.

5. 12.

Poor, but as a Sacred Order of the Christian adMagnes. Ministers. He calls them his Fellow-fervants who are intrusted with the Ministry of Jesus Christ, without whom together with Bishops and Presbyters, there is no Church; they being appointed according to the mind of Christ; as Ministers not of Meat and Drink, but of the Church of God, and of the Mysteries of Jesus

Chrift.

And now methinks I have given a very plain and clear Account of the true State of the Christian Ministry in its first and Purest Times. I mean during the Administration of the Apostles themselves, during the time where St. Luke ends his History of their Proceedings. During all which time, I think it is very plain, that the Affairs of the Christian Church as to all the Sacred Powers of its Ministerial Function; were in the Hands of the Apostles themselves, with Established Presbyters and Deacons under them.

Some share the People might have, and indeed had in the Election of their Ministers, of which I shall speak when I come to treat of their Ordination. I shall only add now under this Head, That those o-thers, Evangelists, Pastors, Prophets, Teachers, &c. mentioned by St. Paul in his Epiftles, appear plainly by the comparing those places together; to have respect rather to the various Gifts, Capacities and Powers, by

the Miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost communicated to them, and the different Offices arising thereupon, than to any set Order, or distinct Functions of Divine and lasting Institution, as those of Presbyters and Deacons are found to be. I proceed therefore

from hence to observe again

III. Thirdly, and laftly, That the Power which the Apostles thus appear to have had and exercised in laying the Foundation of the Christian Church, and establishing a fetled Ministry in it; they before their Decease Bequeathed and Conveyed to others who were to succeed em. This, as to the Churches within the Roman Empire, feems to have been done between St. Paul's first and fecond Journey to Rome. Till about that time, it's I think very plain, That the Affairs of the Christian Church were wholly under the Supreme Government and Direction of the Apostles. They themselves went from place to place, Preaching the Gofpel, and gathering in Believers, fending out others to the work of the Ministry, Visiting again the Churches that had been Gathered, Confirming them that had been Converted, by fending on tem the Holy Ghoft, and now and then as Circumstances required and would admit. Affembling together at Jerusalem, then the chief of all Christian Churches, to give account to each other of their E 4

their Proceedings, and to determin of such farther Matters as by the conduct of God's Holy Spirit they feem'd to be directed to. But after St. Paul's first Imprisonment at Rome, the Apostles moved by a sense of the Difficulties which they found attended them, and the Christians in their long Absence and Distance from em; and more especi-Tim.4.1. ally instructed by the Holy Ghost, that Perilous Times were coming, and that Provision was necessarily to be made for the continuance of the Church and its Ministry; they began to appoint and fettle a Governor, or Overleer in every Great City or Province where they had a confiderable number of Converts, who should exercise the fame Power and Authority which they themfelves had done. And particularly who were by the Impolition of Hands to Ordain Ministers, as the Apostles themselves had done before them. Timothy at Ephefus and Titus at Crete, we have express mention of in holy Scripture, who, that they were not meerly of the Order of Presbyters, but in a Rank and Degree above them, is, to me very Apparent; not only from the concurrent Teltimony of all Church History, which declare 'em to have been Bishops there, but allo from the Account we have of their Power, Character and Authority, in feveral Passages of St. Paul's Epistles to them. **Epistles**

Epistles which the late Learned Bishop of Chester, who had perhaps a clearer Insight into, and a founder Judgment in these things than any other Man, declares to have been written in that very interval of time that I am now speaking of. In which Timothy is not only with an Emphasis stiled a Man of God, 1 Tim. 6. but left at Ephefus by St. Paul for this very Reason and Business, That he might charge 1 Tim. 1.3. or command some that they teach no other Doctrin than that declared by the Apostles. Titus is left at Crete, that he might fet in order the 1.5. things that were wanting, and ordain Elaers in every Church, as the Apostle had, it seems, before appointed him to do, when he fix'd him there. In short, the main subfrance of those three Epistles, is to give general Rules and Directions about Ecclesiastical Discipline. About holding fast the form of found Dectrin, 1 Tim. 1. taking especial care of false Teachers, of the 18. Publick Prayers of the Church, of the Attire 2. 1, 13. of Christian Women, of Widows and Ser-v. 3, 9. 4. vants, Oc. And especially about the Quality 1. 1. 2. fications and Behaviour of those who served in the facred Ministry of the Church, and the care to be taken in admitting Men into these Offices. The things that thou hast heard 2Tim, 2,2, of me before many Witnesses, the same commit thou to Faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also. And with this caution, that he should lay Hands Suddenly on no Man. Thus

they provided for a lasting perpetual Ministry by transferring that Authority of Ordaining others which they themselves had

receiv'd from Christ.

Those to whom this Power and Authority were committed, began now-about in a more peculiar Sense to be called Bishops. A Title, which tho' before this time and in other places of Scripture is thought by fome to have been used in a larger and more general Signification, and as fuch to have been apply'd to those who in Order were but Presbyters. or Deacons: Yet about this time to befure it began in Ecclefiastical Writings to have a more Particular and determinate Signification; and apparently to point out a Distinct Order of Men, fuperior both to Presbyters and Deacons. Which Distinction in the very beginning of the next Age, and even in the Apostles own time, at the latter end of it, is very nicely and carefully observed. Let me give the Reader a Tast of this, that by comparing this Scripture Account with that of those Apostolic Writers who were contemporary with the Apostles. and received Directions and Instructions from 'em, he may have a true sense and a right understanding of these things. Clemens, that same Clemens who is mentioned by St. Phil, 4. 3. Paul, as a Fellow-labourer with him; accord-

ing to our best Chronology in these Matters,

Was

was made Bishop of Rome about A. D. 69. about 36 Years after Christ's Death, and one or two after the Martyrdom of Sr. Peter and St. Paul. - And he, in an Epistle to the Corinthians written on purpose to compose a tumukuous Disorder that had been among them about their deposing some Bishop or Minister, tells them thus; That God has ordained by bis Supreme Will and Clem. Rom. Authority, both WHERE and by what 1 Ep. S. PERSONS, his Service is to be perform- 40. ed; that so all things being Piously done, unto all well-pleasing they may be acceptable to him. They therefore who make their Oblations at the appointed Seasons are accepted and Happy; and following the directions of the Lord, they offend not. And then to shew that regard is also in Conscience to be had to the Persons who Minister, as well as to Times and Seasons; he adds, The High Priest bas his proper Services, and to the Priest his proper place is allotted him, and to the Levites is appointed their Ministry, and the Lay-man is confined to the Commands that belong to Lay-men only. Again, The Apostles have Preached to, as from our Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ from God; Christ therefore was sent by God, and the Apostles by Christ. So both of their Offices were regularly fulfilled according to the Will of God. Thus Preaching through Countries and Cities

ties they Ordained out of the first Fruits of their Conversion, having first proved 'em by the Spirit, Bishops, and Deacons or Ministers, to those that should afterwards believe. And what wonder is it that those who were en-

trusted with such a Work by God in Christ, appointed the aforesaid Ministers, when Moses also that blessed Servant and Faithful in all his House, set down in the Holy Seriptures all Things that were commanded him? And so he goes on relating how God miraculously determined the Emulation that was made about the Priesthood, Numb. 17. and then adds. So likewise our Apostles knew by Jesus Christ that Contention would arise about the E-

5. 44. Emilia ovópalos lis Emiskoemis.

PISCOPACY, or MINISTRY.
And therefore having a perfect Fore-knowledge, they gave direction how other approved Men, upon their Death should succeed them in their Ministry. Those therefore who are either Appointed by them [the Apostles] or afterwards by other celebrated Men with the Consent of the whole Church, &c. we findge to be unjustly mov'd from their Ministry. Thus Clement the Fellow-labourer with St. Paul, who wrote this Epistle, which was then Publickly read in the Christian Churches: Before the Death of the Evangelist and Apostle St. John.

Euseb. ly read in the Christian Churches: Before the E.H. Lib. Death of the Evangelist and Apostle St. John. And what plainer Testimony can be desir'd of the Apostolic Institution and Ordination of a Gospel Ministry? And that too not

merely

merely in the way of Prudential Council and Advice: But by the Divine Authority which they received from Jesus Christ, who sent the Apostles to this Ministry, as he

himself was sent by God.

The next I shall mention is Ignatius Bi-Thop of Antioch in Syria, and one also of St. John's Disciples, and a renouned Martyr for the Christian Faith, who in this Matter is much more particular. He, in feven fhort Epistles which he wrote in his Journey from Antioch to Rome, whither he was fent by the Sentence of Trajan, the Emperor, to be devoured by wild Beafts; Does not only bear Witness sixteen or seventeen several times to the Apostolic Establishment of Bishops, Priests and Deacons: But also with fuch Additional Expressions and Admonitions as do abundantly declare the Regard that by all Christians ought to be had to such Apostolic Ordinances and Institutions. In his Epistle to the Ephesians he perswades em to be Subject to the Bishop and the Presby. tery, that they may be sanctify'd, in all Things. For Jesus Christ our Inseparable Life is the Counsel or Mind of the Father, as the Bi- yvours. Shops Appointed in several Territories are the Counsel or Decree of Jesus Christ. Wherefore ye ought to come together according to the Decree of your Bisbop; as indeed ye do. For your Renouned Presbytery, worthy of God is so united,

ted, or adapted to your Bishop as the Strings to the Harp. After this he again exhorts them to come together in one Faith, and to Obes their Bishop, and the Presbytery with an entire Affection. Here is methinks sufficient Testimony of the Antient and Early Establishment of Bishops and Presbyters in the Christian Church. But Deacons, who were particularly mention'd with Bishops by Clemens Romanus, are not here as yet mention'd at all. but Presbyters. And those who are apt to draw strange Inferences from the Silence of Church History, would have done so no doubt here, had the rest of Ignatius's Epiftles been loft. But to prevent all this, in the Passages that I shall next mention, we have all the three Orders diffinct. In his Epiffle to the Magnesians he mentions Damas their Bishop worthy of God, Bassus and Apollonius their worthy Presbyters, and then he adds, my Fellow-Servant Sotio your Deacon, whom may I enjoy for as much as he is Subject to his Bi-(hop as to the Grace of God, and to the Presby-tery as to the Law of Jesus Christ. And it becomes you also not too familiarly to treat the Youth of your Bishop, but according to the Power of God the Father to shew him all Reverence. as I know your Holy Presbyters do. Submitting to him, as Men Prudent towards God, and in so doing, not to him, but rather to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Bishop

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Bishop of us all. It becomes us therefore not only to be called Christians, but to be fo. Some indeed call a Man Bishop, but do all Things wihout him. But such seem to me to have no good Conscience, because they do not strmly Assemble together as they are commanded. I exhort you that you endeavour to do every Thing in the Peace of God; your Bishop presiding in the place of God, your Presbyters in the place of the Council of the Apostles, and your beloved Deacons most Delightful to me, being entrusted with the Ministry of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before all Ages. - together with your mest worthy Bishop, and the well platted Spiritual Grown of the Presbytery, and the Deacons that are according to God. To the Trallians he writes thus, While ye are Obedient to your Bishop as to Jesus Christ, ye appear to me to live not after the manner of Men, but according to Jesus Christ .- It's necessary that ye continue to do nothing without your Bishop, alfo be ye subject to the Prrsbyteiy, as to the Apostles of Jesus, who is our Hope; the Deacons also as Stewards of the Mysteries of Jesus Christ, not as the Ministers of Meat and Drink, but of the Church of God. To the Philadelphians thus, I cried whilft I was yet among you, I lifted up my Voice, Attend to the Bishop, and to the Presbytery, and to the Deacons. some were of Opinion that I spake this upon my Intimation of some Division that was coming among

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mong you, But God is my Witness, for whose Sake I am in Bonds, that I knew nothing from any one. But the Spirit Spake on this wife. Saying do nothing without your Bishop. Which I take to be a folemn declaring that he foake this by Revelation. It is indeed tedious to transcribe'em all, but one or two more are of too great Importance to be omitted. To the Smyrnaans he gives this Exhortation. Follow your Bishop as Jesus Christ sollowed the Father, and your Presbytery as the Apostles, and the Deacons Reverence as the Command of God. Let no Man do any Thing of what belongs to the Church without the Bishop. Let that Eucharist be esteemed Right and Just, which is offer'd up either by the Bishop, or by one to whom the Bishop has given his Consent. Where soever the Bishop shall appear, there let the People be. Just as where Jesus Christ is, there also is his Catholic Church. It is not lawful either to Baptize, or to celebrate your most Solemn Feast of Charity without the Bishop. But whatever is approved by him is also Pleasing unto God. To the People under Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna he also writes thus, in that Epistle dedicated to Polycarp himself. Attend unto your Bishop that God may also have regard to you. My Soul be Pleage for theirs who submit to their Bishop, with their Presbyters and Deacons. And may my Lot be found together with theirs in God. Methinks

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S. 6.

its worth while to fland still and Pause here a little, and to fee how these things agree with our late Author's Priesthood in common to all Christians; and with the pretended Fundamental Rights of making Ministers by their natural Liberties and Privileges, as if the Ministry were a mere Human Institution. Methinks Bishops that are to be Regarded, and Submitted to, and Obeyed as God the Father, and as Jefus Christ, and without whom nothing ought to be done in the Church of God, and Presbyters to be esteem'd as the Great Council of the Apostles, and Deacons as Ministers of the Mysteries of Jesus Christ: Appear with a quite different Face, to what our Adversary would paint the Christian Ministers and Clergy with. Let those then that admire our Adversaries late Performance and Boast of the excellent Force of his Unanswerable Arguments, which he has brought against the Divine Authority and Power of the Gospel Ministry in the Hands of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, and in Defence of a Priesthood in common, deriving their Power from the People only: Let 'em bring the best of his Arguments hither, and try to Reconcile'em with the Doctrins, Declarations, and Instructions given by St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles, and by St. Paul in his two Epistles to Timothy and one to Titus; and by Clement Bishop

Bishop of Rome and Ignatius Bishop of An-And when they have read all these tioch. Things over with Fidelity and Care: Then let 'em prove, if they can, from Scripture and Antiquity, that the Apostles Instituted no Presbyters nor Deacons; or that they did it, not by virtue of their Divine Commission from Christ, but of mere Prudential Advice only. And let 'em shew us if they can, that Bishops were not of Apostolic Institution and Appointment: But unknown to the first Apostolic Primitive Ages in the Church. If they can do this, it will I own be somewhat to their Purpose. But if this cannot be done while fuch Writings are Extant in the World, and proved of Authentic Authority: It will always be a valuable part of the commendable Chara-Eter of every National Church, in these latter Ages of the World; to find their whole Discipline, and Constitution, and Government, thus very Agreeable to the Discipline, Constitution and Government, of the first, Purest and Apostolic Ages. And as all this is what the late Writer of this Pestilent Book could scarce Possibly be ignorant of: So had he not, in other Things as well as in this, approved himself a Man of neither Modesty nor Conscience, one would have wonder'd with what Face he could Broach or Espouse Notions so directly contrary to the

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the known Doctrins, Principles and Practices of the Antient Primitive Christianity. And he knows very well, that the farther we go down in our Enquiries into Church History and Fathers about these Matters: We have the more plain, the more Numerous and Incontestable Evidence of 'em all

to our Purpose.

But because he has pretended to some Arguments in defence of this wild Notion of a Priesthood in common to all Christians: -It will be Justice to hear him, and consider the force of what he has to fay. And indeed, upon a ferious View of it altogether, its very obvious that he was put upon this Notion not fo much by the Plainness, or Force of any Reasonings that he had to offer in its defence: As from the Necessity of it to maintain the chief Point that he had undertaken to Espouse. He that would perswade the World, that the People have a Natural and Fundamental Right of making their own Ministers, should first convince 'em that they have also a Right of officiating in those Offices themselves; otherwise it would be eafie to reply that no Body can convey that Power to another, with which he himself This Objection our never was invested. Author wifely enough forefaw, and accordingly to Defend the People's Right in making their Ministers as he calls it: It became necefnecessary for him to assert the People's Right to Minister themselves, if they so thought sit. He grounds his Reasonings plainly upon it, if any Christian, as has been already provenage 355 ed, may Exercise any Ecclesiastical Function, when set apart by the People for it:—Then the Custom of having the Approbation of some Bishops before they are admitted to the Exercise of their Office, cannot be of Divine Appointment, &c. True, but then the Question now before us is, how that Pretence of every Christians common Right to the Exercise of any Ecclesiastical Function has been proved? Why.

1. He quarrels with the word Prieft, tel-Page 108. ling us that among Christians, one no more than another can be reckon'd a Priest, because the only Sacrifices of our Religion are Prayers, Praises, and Thanksgivings, which every one of the Congregation offers up for himself. To this I answer, that Words are of little Importance to us, otherwise than as they convey the Right Notions and Idea's of Things. And therefore, tho' we Christians have now no other Sacrifices to offer, than our Prayers and Praises; Yet by the same Figure by which Prayers and Praises are in Scripture called Sacrifices, the Persons who Minister in those Prayers, may be called Priests too. But what's all this to the Question in hand? Does this prove that every Man accord-

according to the Original Constitution of Christ's Church, had a common Right to Minister in the Public Assemblies or Congregation, without, and Antecedently to his being peculiarly fet apart by folemn Ordination thereto? This is the true Notion of a Priesthood in common to all Christians, and must be made good, or elfe that Notion must fall to the ground as Ridiculous and Absurd. But as to this, his trifling Criticism about the Word, is nothing to the purpose.

2. Another Argument, for I follow him rather in what I judge to be the proper Method of Reasoning on this Subject, than in the order of Pages, is; That as the sole End and Design of the Page 128. Ministry, is the Propagation of the true Faith, and wholesome Doctrin: So where these are Taught and Preached, there must be a true Ministry and a true Church, which the Food of Life will Nourish what Hand soever it comes from. To this I answer first, that our Adversary here has by no means set out the fole and full end of the Christian Ministry; which was originally Instituted and Appointed to other Purposes than what he has in Prudence thought fit to mention. Such as in the very Nature of em shew that no Man can have a Right to officiate in, without Power and a Com-F 3 million

mission from him. And therefore were wisely enough omitted by our Author

on this occasion. But

2. If he had fet forth the full and fole end of the Christian Ministry: Yet his Argument on this point is False, and Abfurd, and Wicked, and Dangerous. And that because God in the Laws and Institutions of the Gospel, has not only recommended the End, but also prescribed the proper Means of attaining to that end, and Bound and Oblig'd us to the use of 'em. Such a fort of Arguing would indeed be of force where God had left us to our felves at large, to Provide our felves of Means to that End. Had God then Instituted no Gospel Ministry, I could have yielded to this way of Reasoning. But, let our Adversaries, the Best of 'em, Prove this if they can, Let'em fearch the Scripture, and confult Antiquity; and shew us if they are able, that the Apostles Instituted, and Ordained no Ministry. Or that what they did of this kind was not by Commission and Authority from God and Christ. The whole of this Controversie will turn upon that, and therefore if they can make this Good, I will have all the regard to this kind of Reasoning that our Adversaries can Defire me. But if this cannot be deny'd, that Christ by his Apofiles did Institute and Ordain a settled Ministry for the Christian Church: God's Act in this Case, as our Author says on a like occasion, does as fully express his Mindas Words, and as effectually confine Lay-Page 123. men to the Things requir'd of Laymen only; and with as effectual a Prohibition of their Ministry in the Divine Offices of the Christian Church, as the there had been a positive Law in express Words to that pur-

pose.

Now as things stand thus, we are not only to have Regard to the Public Worship in General, but to the Persons too that Minister in it. Not only to the Doctrin and the Sacraments, but also to the Hand from which they come. And let those who think otherwise bring the best of their Reafonings on this Point to the Jewish Church, which as I faid above was a Type of the Christian, and in which 'tis confes'd too, that there was a peculiar Priesthood and Miniftry appointed, and let 'em try what force it would have there. Let Uzzah plead with God, that the end of the Priesthood with respect to the Ark was only the Care and Preservation of it; and that therefore wherever the Ark was preferv'd from an apparent Danger, there was, as to that, a true Priesthood, whatever Hand it was that Minifired to it. Let Corah, Dathan and Abiram, plead that the fole End and Delign of the Priesthood, was the Decent and Devout making their Sacrifices and offering of Incense, and that where these are Decently offered, there is a true Ministry and a true Iewish Church from whatever Hand it comes. And I think that the Divine Vengeance executed on these impious Invaders. does sufficiently base the Pretence; and shew that God will be Sanctify'd in the Persons that come near him as well as in the Divine Offices to be Performed by 'em. Now if God by the Gospel has a Setled and Appointed Ministry of Divine Institution, as well as he had under the Law: I can fee no reason why his Displeasure should not be as great against all those who Invade the Priesthood under the Evangelical, as it was under the Levitical Dispensation.

3. Our Advertary argues again from the Absurdity which he supposes must follow Page 126. the Consining the Ministery to a set of Ecclesialities. For this, he says, would make it no less than Sacrilege in others to preach the Gospel to Heathens, and to form them into a Society. Even where, by Reading the Gospel, they might be Converted; and yet,

Page 127 having no Communion with any Christian Church from whom they might have Ministers, none among em could have a Right Pub-

lickly to say Prayers, or Administer the Sacraments, the very Attempt being a Profanation of the Holy Ordinances. This we see is an Argument wholy founded on a Particular Extraordinary Case, in which Ministers Regularly Ordained being not to be had, he would suppose it Absurd, not to allow, in such a Case, the Laymen to Minister and to form themselves into a Church. Well, let this be allow'd that we may go on upon this Supposition. Why then from hence he would infer, that there is nothing in this Function, of which every Christian provided with Abilities is not capable. How does he mean Capable? Authorised and Empower'd by the Laws of God and the Institutions of the Gospel, as of common Right? The Case before us and the supposition upon it, prove no such Thing. That may be Lawful in extreme Necessity, which without such Necessity would be Hainous, and Abominable, and a Sin unto Damnation. As for Example, Its granted Lawful to kill another Man. when there is no other Possible way of Preventing him from killing me. This extreme Necessity makes that Lawful which otherwise would not be so. But then, would not he Reason like a Mad-man, that should from hence conclude it Lawful for him to kill every Man he meets? Just such is our Author's noble Talent at Reasoning, who pleads

pleads a Case of extreme Necessity against the Force and lasting Obligation of an Ordinance, or Institution, when there is no Ne-

ceffity at all of fuperfeding it.

Yes, fays he, the Reason of the Case supposes it. For the Absence of the Priest creates no new Right, but only calls People to the Exercise of a Right which they had before. But with his favour, it must first be prov'd that they had such a Right before. Otherwise, I think that it will be a more Modest, and a more Rational way of Vindicating such a Practice, by Presuming on God's savourable Consent, and Approbation to the Performance of those Duties in an extraordinary way, where Ordinary and Regular means cannot be had. Rather than to pretend to a Natural Right and Liberty to that, which Nature alone could never have attained to.

4. Hislast Effort to the defence of a Priesthood in common to all Christians, is this, That Christians did perform such Divine Offices in the beginnings of Christianity as appears from Holy Scripture. This indeed is to the purpose if it be true, and well proved to be so. To make this out he be-

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Supper; which he tells us that the Scripture no where makes necessary to be receiped from Page 104. the Hands of a Priest; Nay not one instance of

the Laities receiving it so can be produc'd from thence. No? what manner of Proof will this Author expect? Will he allow Just Inferences from Scripture, with Plain and Rational Confequences a sufficient Proof? If he will I'll try to fatisfy him. Does he think then that it was necessary for the Christians in the Apostles times, to receive this Sacrament as it was then administred in the Christian Churches? If not, he changes the Question, and it is not the Priesthood. but the Necessity of the Sacrament that is then to be disputed. But if he will grant this, then it is Incumbent upon him to prove, that this Holy Supper was adminifired in the Primitive Church, not by the Ministers alone, but by the People in common. This is highly incumbent upon him. in that, as I have proved already the Divine Institution of a Gospel Ministry: That must fairly and rationally Prefume the Administration of Divine Offices in their Hands, unless he can make good the contrary. And how will he do this?

All his Pretences from the Jewish Custom in their Passover, in which as he tells us from Grotius, that not the Priest but the Master of the Family and the Feast distributed to all the Page 105. Guests, will not help him. No, not tho' seconded with his farther Observation, that Christ instituted no new Rites, superadded to the

the Remembrance of his Sufferings. In that, tho' it be confessed, that Christ did in some measure build on the Foundation of the Tewish received Customs in his Christian Institutions: Yet not so, but that he made either by himself or by the direction of his Apostles, several changes as to Time, Perfons, Places and other such like Circumstances. Nay, even he added Force and Obligation to those other Rites which he did not. alter. Baptism was in use among the Jews, before our Saviour's time, and yet not that Custom, but Christ's Command to Baptize in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoft, surperadded to that Cufrom, makes it a Christian Sacrament.

So also the Lord's Supper was first celebrated by Christ, after the Jewish Passover. But yet, as it was not that Act alone, but Christ's Command, do this in Remembrance of me, that made it a Christian Duty and of Perpetual Obligation in the Church: So Christ did not bind his Disciples to observe, nor did they observe, the same Circumstances of Time, Place and Persons in this Ordinance, which the Jews had done in theirs. The Jewish Paschal Supper was but once in every Year, and celebrated always at Home in their Families, on the Eve before the Passover: But the Christians from the beginning had their Sacramental breaking of Bread

as often as they met together for public Christian Worship, which was at least, every Lord's Day, and that too with as many Families Assembled together as conveniently could be had, and would be allow'd. So that there is no more reason to believe, that this Sacrament was usually Administred in the Primitive times by Laymen, because the Jewish Paschal Supper was so Administred; Than there is to believe that it was then administred but once a Year like the Jewish Festival. 'Tis confess'd, indeed, that in the very Beginnings of Christianity, this Sacrament did follow fome common Meal. and this in all likely-hood did continue till their Minds were more fully enlighten'd by the Spirit of God, which as to the complete Establishment of Christianity, we know, in various Instances was not done all at once, but occasionally and by degrees. And this is that that Tertullian feems to have intended in a Passage cited by our Adversary, and scandalously misapply'd, Page 107. Tertullian was speaking of some things that had been Receiv'd, and Prevailed in the Chriftian Church by establish'd Custom and Tradition: Which had no direct and express Text of Scripture to command 'em. And among others he mentions this of the Manner and Time of celebrating this Sacrament. Eucharistia Sacramentum & in tempore victus

Cap. IV.

victus, & omnibus mandatum a Domino; etiam antelucanis cœtibus, nec de aliorum manu, quam Prasidentium Sumimus. That Sacrament of the Eucharist which first was Appointed in Meal-times and to all, we now receive in our Assemblies before Day, and only from the Hands of our Spiritual Governours. This was far from complaining of it as an Innovation; its only declaring that fome Customs took place and were of just force by Apostlic Institution: Altho' they had no express Scripture Law for them. Besides, if omnibus mandatum must needs be rendred committed to all in our Adversaries sense, then Tertullian, whose Reasonings we are not oblig'd in every Instance to defend, pushes this farther than it will bear. In that it can never be pretended, that the Words of the Institution committed to all Christians a Power of Administring this Sacrament. And that no fuch Custom ever prevail'd in the Primitive Church, is I think, sufficiently evident, not only from the very Reason and Purpose of an Instituted Ministry, but more especially from those remarkable Words of Ignatius. Let that Eucharist only be accounted Right and Just which is offered up by the Bishop, or by one to whom the Bishop has given his Consent. For ad Smyrn. it is not lawful either to Baptize, or to Celebrate your most solemn Sacramental Feast without the Bishop. But whatever is approved by him is pleasing

who was cotemporary with the Apostle, and a Disciple of St. John, could not be Ignorant of the Established Customs of the Christian Church, nor of their Obligation.

2. His next Pretence is the Peoples Right in Preaching. St. Paul admonishes the Hebrews, to consider one another to provoke unto Page 132. Love and to good Works, and not to for sake the Assembling themselves together as the manner of some was, but exhorting one another daily, and so much the more as ye see the Day approaching: Therefore the People had a common Right and Practice in Preaching as well as Ministers. That is to fay, Christ said to Peter, feed my Sheep, Ergo, the Pope of Rome is Infallible. I can see no better consequence in the one than in the other. He tells us, I know, that St. Paul supposes the Laity as much bound to speak in their Religious Assemblies as to Assemble, making the one a Reason of the other. But I cannot see any Reason for this, so long as they had Appointed Pastors to Speak, and Preach, and Exhort 'em in their Public Assemblies; and might also Encourage each other in their private Converfation. And therefore I must leave this to his Wisdom to make Good the Conclusion at his leifure.

15.

He tells us again that St. Paul's forbidding Page 133. the Women to teach, 1 Cor. 14. infers the Right of the Men so to do. But he did not tell us upon what occasion St. Paul made that Prohibition. It was customary in the Jewish Synagogue that those who had the Spirit of Prophecy, and any Word of Exhortation from God's Spirit, to speak to the People by the Permission of the Master of the Synagogue. And this was continu'd in the Christian Church by those who had the Miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost; whether of Tongues, or of Prophecy, or of the Interpretation of Tongues. But this St. Paul so Regulates, that he suffers not the Women even on this account, to speak in the Congregation. And that this was the case is undeniably plain from the Context. Now what Right is from hence to be infer'd for the Men? No more than a Right of shewing their Miraculous Gifts in Public, which excludes all the Rest, that were not of the Appointed Ministry.

happened after the Martyrdom of St. Stephen, that they that were scattered abroad went Alls 8. 4. every where Preaching the Word. That is, those who by their Function were Appointed to that Work. Again Phil. 1. 14. Many of the Brethren waxing Confident by my Bonds, are the more Bold to speak the Word without

'Tis faid also, upon the Dispersion that

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fear. That is, such Brethren whose Province it was to Preach the Word. It must reasonably and necessarily be so limited, when there is a setled Ministry peculiarly appointed to those very purposes. And how then can either of these Texts prove Preaching to be a Right in common to all Christians? The very End of their Institution answers the Question, let this Author pretend what he will to the contrary.

Well, but to go through with his sham

Pretences, he would plead

3. Lastly, That the People had a Right to Baptize also. For, fays he, the Com- Page 135. mand given to the Apostles to Baptize no more excludes the Laity from that, than from Preaching or Receiving the Sacrament. What Nonsense is this? Whoever pretended that the Apostles Command to Baptize, given 'em by Christ, excluded the People from Receiving the Sacrament? If he means this, that the general Command given to the Apostles will as well admit the People, notwithfranding a Peculiar Commission, to Baptize as to Preach and to Administer: Then indeed he founds his Argument upon a Supposition that he had before Proved their Right to Preach and to Administer the Lord's Supper. But as the Premises are not proved, nor is there any Reason at all to believe 'em true; so the Conclusion cannot be Good.

Good. Let him therefore first bring some better Proof than he has yet done, of the Peoples common Right in Preaching and Administring the other Sacrament; and then we will farther confider the force of his Con-

clusion as to this.

But it was the Duty of the new Converts, according to their Abilities and Opportunities, to Increase the Number of Christian Converts. Yes, but still every Man in his own Sphere and Province, the Ministers in their Ministry, and the Layman confin'd to those Things which are enjoyn'd to Laymen. But a very antient Author Pfeudo Ambrose observes, that all at first Taught and Baptiz'd. I have not this Pseudo Ambrose now by me, but its no matter. If this very Antient Author makes any mistaken Observation, and contrary to what more Ancient and better Authorities, fuch as Clemens, Ignatius, Justin Martyr declare: Which of 'em I pray is most to be regarded?

But, fays he again, the Command given to the Apostles to Baptize, did not oblige em to do it themselves, but only to cause it to be done. And therefore St. Peter does not Baptize Cornelius and his Housbold himself, but only Commands it to be done, which must be performed by Some of the Brethren. And therefore bere even Laymen Baptized the first Fruits of the Gentiles, tho' the shief of the Apostles was prefent, and

even at his Request. Hold, fost and fair, good Sir. First prove, if you can, that there were neither Presbyters nor Deacons among those Brethren. For he that forms an Argument, and for want of Proof only presumes upon the Truth of the Premises, a common Practice with this Author; may by degrees lead Men into ten Thousand Abfurdities if they will admit his Confequences. Nay indeed the Presumptive Evidence lies all on our side. For as Philip had be- Act 8. ult. fore this preached the Gospel as far as Cafares, and doubtless a Christian Church was there fetled with Presbyters and Deacons, and feveral Converts besides of the Circumcifion went down with Peter, and fe- Act 10. veral were then present with him: It is I45. think much more reasonably to be presumed, that some of the Ministry were among them, to whom St. Paul gave that Command of Baptizing him, than otherwife.

Philip himself, he tells us, could Baptize Page 136.
by no other Right than what was common to all
Christians, because no such Power was included
in his Commission of looking after the Poor. But
I have shewed the falseness of this Reasoning already, by proving above, both from
Scripture and Fathers: That the Deaconship was a Divine Function, and included
a Right to the Sacred Ministry of Divine

Offices in the Church.

Once more yet, it was a Lay-man, fays he, that Baptized the great Apostle of the

Gentiles. That's more than our Adversary and all his Friends can prove. All that is faid as to this matter is only, that after Saul had recovered his Sight by Ananias's Prayer, Allsix.18. and Imposition of Hands, he arose and was Baptized. But whether Ananias himself Baptized him, or whether Ananias was a Presbyter, or a Deacon, or a Layman, nothing at all is faid or hinted : And therefore this Wife Author draws a wild Conclusion from unknown and uncertain Premises according to his usual Talent upon all Occasions.

> But because it is by laying mighty stress on fuch Uncertainties as these, and by nibling at some particular Facts, in which the Sacred Pen-Men are filent, as to the Circumstances and Manner of 'em, that this Famous Author fetches his best Arguments, and supplies himself with Notions and Principles: It may not be Improper to offer one or two Observations that will shew how Uncertain, and Deceitful, and Inconclusive

a Method this is.

1. Then let it be Remembred, as was faid before, that the Apostles themselves had not a full and compleat Knowledge of all Things, relating to the Establishment of Christianity made to 'em in an Instant, and

all at once, but occasionally and by degrees. See the most Learned and Judicious Bishop of Chester to this purpose. Time was when In Alla the Church of Christ consisted wholly of Apost. Converts from the Jews, and none others 6. 15. were thought capable of being admitted into it. Time was when it was Disputed for a while, whether the Gentile Converts, who were now admitted, should be Circumcifed. Time was when the Christians were Governed by the Apostles alone, who afterwards fet Bishops over every Church, as they were to continue till the end of the World. Other Instances also might be mention'd of Things that were Gradually and Occasionally setled; and yet are of the greatest Moment, and perpetual Obligation. So also, if it should be Granted, which yet I think can never Possibly be proved, that there was a time, in the Infancy and Imperfect State of Christianity, when before Appointing a fetled Ministry, Divine Offices were administred in common by all: If I fay this be Granted, yet it does no more prove that therefore it may Lawfully be fo Practis'd now: Than it proves, that the Gentiles should now be excluded because there once was a Church without them. Precedents and Rules must be taken from Things in a State of Settlement and Perfe-Ction.

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2. The fecond thing to be observed in these Matters, is that the Holy Penmen writing to fuch Persons to whom the Proper Circumstances of Facts, as to Time, Place, Persons and Forms, were very well known: Did not always take Care to relate these things Particularly, but tell the Facts, and fometimes take no Notice of these Circumstances. Or, it may be, give only some short Hints, and Intimations about 'em; by which indeed after Ages are chiefly to be Instructed. Now, if from the Silence of our Church Histories, Perverse People will Wrangle and Dispute, and necessarily Conclude, that no regard was had to any Establiff Customs in the manner of such Actions, because they are not always related: They can scarce in any one Thing more egregiously Deceive and Impose upon themselves. For Example. We are told but once in all St. Luke's History of the Acts of the Apostles, that they did Ordain Elders in every Church; and yet, tho' that was spoken but on that one Particular Occasion, the frequent mention of fuch Elders in other Churches, both before and after that Particular Relation, is sufficient to facisfie all Impartial Readers, that the Practice was Univerfal, and that fuch were Ordain'd in all other Churches as well as in those of Lycaonia. So again, Christ gave this Command, Go

Go Teach all Nations, and Baptize them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoft. But for all this, the Socinians will not allow that this Prescribes a Form to be used in Baptisin, and that no such was used by the Apostles; but only, that they Baptized in the Name of the Lord, as is related Atts x. 48. And yet there is a Passage occasionally mention'd in the Acts, which I defy any Man alive fairly and rationally to account for, without admitting that some fuch Form was in use. When Apollos told St. Paul, that he had not so much as heard whe- Alls 19. ther there were any Holy Ghoft: St. Paul re- 2, 3. plies, Unto what then were ye Baptized? A fensless Expostulation, if the true Form of Christian Baptism had not necessarily included a mention of the Holy Ghoft. Such Instances as these plainly shew, that in our Sacred Hiftory the Circumstances of all Facts are to be supposed and allow'd for, according to the received Customs and Practice of those Times, altho' they are not Particularly recited. The frequent mention of Elders in the Christian Church fairly Prefumes for the Apostolic Institution of 'em. A Command to Baptize in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghoft, prescribes a Form for Baptism without a Particular Reciting of the Practice for it. And the early Establishment of a Divine Instituted Ministry in the Chri-G 4

Christian Church, as fairly concludes for and as necessarily supposes the Persons employ'd in Holy Offices to have been of that Number, altho' they are mention'd perhaps only under the Titles of Disciples and Bre-Matt. 28. thren. The Apostles themselves are sometimes fo distinguish'd. Reading then the Scriptures with just allowances according to these two Observations: I am verily perfwaded, that it is not Possible for Mankind to prove any fuch thing as a Priesthood in common to all Christians, and an establish'd Custom for Private Persons to Preach, Baptize and Administer the Lord's Supper, received in the Apostolic Primitive Times of Christianity.

> Thus then I hope that I have sufficiently made Good the two first Things that I proposed, viz. That the Christian Church did not first begin by the Apostles exercise of their mere Natural Rights and Liberties alone; and Ministers deriving their Authority from the People in that way: But by a Divine Charter from God to Christ, from Christ to his Apostles; and so by Divine Institution to be continu'd throughout all Ages, in the Hands of an Established Mi-

nistry.

CHAP. III.

Shewing that the Christian Churches
Power and Authority are not alienable to the State, upon its Incorporation with it.

Aving shewed already that the Chriflian Church first began by a Divine Charrer, or Commission from God; and that too in the Hands of an Establisht Ministry of Divine Institution; that the Apoftles thus left it at their Departure, and that we find it thus in the very first beginnings of the next Age, in the Hands of their Disciples, constituted Bishops of several Churches by them: I think none of our Adversaries can pretend any Alteration in these Particulars, before the Roman Empire became Christian; but that it continued during all that time in the same State as to its Ministry and their Peculiar Divine Right, to the Performing Divine Offices in the Church: I come now to shew

III. That when the Christian Religion, by the Conversion of the Emperors, became the Religion of the State; so that there seemed to be an Incorporation, or Union

nion of the Church and State as into one Body: Yet the Christian Church neither did nor could thereupon, either Lofe or Transfer its Divine Power and Charter to the Civil Magistrate, but as to that, continu'd in the fame condition in which it was before. I mention this left our Adversary should pretend, as indeed he feems to infinuate, that whatever Power the Christian Church and its Ministers would claim before that coalition: Yet that in Confequence of an Establish'd National Church. and the Incorporation of the two Bodies into one thereby; all this Pretended Divine Power, as he will call it, must be Swallow'd up, and Loft, and Devolve upon the Civil Magistrate. But I think otherwife, and do believe and affert, that however the Churches acting under the Rule and Direction, and Government of the Civil Power may, to some People, look like a Giving up all Divine and Independent Power: Yet the Conclusion is Erroneous and Mistaken, and the Church neither does, nor can, make any fuch Transfer, or Bequeft. And that for these two Reasons.

That the Preservation of this Divine Commission or Charter, which is the Foundation of its Ministerial Power and Authority, and by which it becomes a Divine Society in a more eminent Sense than any other now

now in the World, is Absolutely and Essentially necessary to the Regular Being of a Church. Which whenever it either Loses, or Gives up, or has Taken from it: It thereby ceases to be any longer a Divine Society and a Church of Christ, according to the Original Gospel Institution of it. It then, as has been faid already, can be no longer the Mystical Body of Christ, the Houshold of God built on the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner Stone: But comes, as this Famous Gentleman would have it, to frand upon the Level with all Clubs and Private Assemblies, and Cabals, without any manner of Divine Rights or Privileges belonging to it, and Diffolvable at Pleasure. and capable of being destroy'd by the Civil Magistrate whenever he thinks fit. And yet, there is so little Colour or Pretence for such a Principle: That the strictest Christian Kings and Princes in all Primitive Times. whatever other Power they have exercised in Church Affairs, never yet pretended, that I know of, to invade the Priefthood; either by affurning the performance of Divine Offices of Christian Worship themselves, or by caufing others to do fo without that Authority from the Establish'd Ministry, which we call Ordination. These are such Sacred Powers and Authorities as in all Ages have been allow'd Unalienable and Unchangeable. And, not only for the Reason

alledg'd: But moreover,

2. That if the Church be thrown off by the State, and Rejected from the Civil Magistrates Protection, it may be able to subfift again by its own Divine Independent Power, as it did in the Beginning. This is what I am fure upon the Establishment of any National Church ought to be provided for. Because there can be no Lasting Certain Security of any Nation's Continual Protection. But the People, or Government, may in one Age Persecute, and Destroy that Religion, which in another they had protected. And what must then become of the Christians in such a Case? Or how shall they then form themfelves into a Church? This Author has shew'd himself so sensible of the necessity of some Provision against such Contingencies, that he has, with a Boldness peculiar to himself, afferted a Natural Right in the People of forming themselves into Religious Societies according to their own Wills or Confciences. A fufficient Provision, I confess. if it were but a true one. But I have already shew'd above, that this Solution of the Difficulty is Groundless, Precarious, Unreasonable and False; and therefore fome better account of this Matter, and more more agreeable to the Nature of the Chri-Stian Chruch and its Offices, and to its Original Institution must be thought of in its Defence, or else it will lie wholly in the Power and Pleasure of the Supreme Christian Magistrate in every Nation, not only whether there shall be a National, but even a Christian Church or no. In that if all its Power be once deliver'd up to the Magistrate, and He will not Restore it again by fuffering the Church to Ordain its own Ministers, according to the Authority with which they did it before the Union or Incorporation of the two Societies: It must then also cease to be a Christian Church, and a Divine Society according to Christ's Original Institution; and loses all its Claim to the Divine Favours. Privileges and Graces to which by its first Charter it had been entitled. And how then can any Member of fuch a Society be faid to be in Covenant with God? All That was founded on the Churches first Commission and Authority, and the Divine Institution and Power of its Ministers. But now, it feems, according to fome Mens Notions, all this Commission and Authority is surrendred into the Hands of those who have thought fit to detain the Depositum, and thereby not only breaks in upon the Churches Fundamental

mental Conflitution and Establishment, but indeed destroys the very Being of it.

In confequence of all this it is apparent that the Christian Church would be in a much worse Condition when thrown off by any Christian State, than it was before their Union and Incorporation. And the manifest Apparent Absurdity of such a Pernicious, Deftructive Consequence, so evidently contrary to the Nature and first Constitution of this Divine Society, shews plain enough, that it never was, nor could be, the Will of God, that upon the Incorporation of these two Diffinct Societies, the Fundamental Rights and Powers of either one of them should be loft. But that as they come together with Distinct Powers: fo if the Christian Church should happen to be discarded out of the Protection of the Civil Authority; it may still be left in as good a Condition as it was in before, and with a Right of proceeding in all its Divine and Holy Offices, after the fame manner, and by the fame Authority. Its Divine Charter is Essential, Perpetual, and Unalienable.

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CHAP. IV.

The Churches Independent Power not Inconsistent with the Civil Magistrates Supremacy and Authority.

A S the last Chapter has shewn that the Gospel Charter by which the Christian Church exists is Unalienable: So the

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IV. Laftly. That fuch a Divine Power and Authority in the Church, as to the Ministerial Offices that are Essential to the Christian Worship, and of Divine Institution, is not at all Inconsistent with the Supreme Power of the Civil Magistrate; nor does any further Interfere with his Authority and Commands, than is necessary to Support the Christian Worship and Religion. This is one Main Important Point in Question, how two such Divine Independent Powers can be Reconcil'd, and duly exercis'd without Clashing and Interfering, and fo breaking in the one upon the other, that the State must be Cramp'd and Hamper'd in its Jurisdiction by the Pretended Divine Authority of the Church? And this be tells us breeds fuch Confusion as could

not be from God, and therefore the Pretence to fuch a Divine Power in the Church, must needs be thought an Usurpation. He has been told above, that if he had levell'd his Discourse only against the Abuse of Church Authority, and the Manifest Encroachments, and Usurpations that have been made upon the Civil Powers, by Extending the Church Authority beyond its due bounds, he might, for me, have gone on Quietly and Undisturb'd. But when infread of this, he ftrikes at all at once; charges all pretence to any Divine Rights, or Powers in the Christian Church and Ministry, with the same Arrogance and Usurpation; and allows no Body to affert the one without lying under the Imputation of either Directly Denying or by confequence Impugning the other; and thereby endeavours, as much as in him lays, to create a Jealousie in all Christian Princes and Magistrates, against those Ministers who pretend a Divine Commission, and Power from God in their Holy Orders, and Function: I must beg his Patience while I endeavour to shew him his Mistake, and undertake to make it appear, that fuch a Divine and Independent Power in the Church as is here pleaded for, and proved : Is not Inconfiftent with the Civil Magistrates Supremacy, nor does any more Interfere with his Conta mands,

mands, than the Discharge of a Good Conscience in the Worship of God, and the Practice of Christian Duties will always do. The truth of this will be plain if we consider well.

I. What is the true Ground and Foundation of all that Independent Power and Authority which we plead to belong to the Christian Church mand that is nothing elfe than the Divine Charter or Commission upon which it is Establish'd. It does not arise from any Natural Rights, Liberties and Claims, but from the Divine Authority, which by the Revelation of the Christian Gospel is committed to it. And whoever pretends to any other Independency than what this Gives, or what becomes Absolutely necessary to the due Execution of that Commission, as Deliver'd in Scripture, and understood by the early Practice of the most Primitive Church: Seems to mes to mistake his Claim; and may for ought I know, run into many of the Abfurdities that this Author complains of.

2. That, for this reason, neither the Church nor its Ministers can plead to be Exempt and Independent in any other Cases or Matters, than those Offices and Duties to which the Gospel binds them, and which their Commission was given to support; and what by a necessary Consequence, must

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be requir'd to that End. By this they have a Divine Right and Power from God, over and above the claims of Natural Conscience, for their assembling together for the Public Worship of God, according to the Commands and Rules of the Golpel. And no Laws or Commands of any Prince upon Earth whatfoever, can make it Unlawful before God for em to to do. By this they are under the Ariclest Obligations to admit Christian Proselytes into the Church by Baptism, and if the Civil Magistrate should never so Peremptorily enjoya 'em to forego that Ordinance; and to lay afide that Sacrament: It would be their Duty not to comply with him. Some other Inftances of the like nature might be mention'd, as that of holding Synods when the extreme Necessities of the Church, and the Preservation of Religion shall require it; and when the Civil Magistrate instead of admitting this under its Rule and Direction, shall cast it wholly out of its Protection and Care, and put it into its Primitive State of Perfecution and Separate Government. Inflances of this nature there are feveral, in which the Christians derive not their Power and Authorny of acting from the Civil Powers, but from the Laws of God and the Commission of the Gospel, and such Authority too as no Magistrate on Earth can dilannul,

nul, or dissolve the Obligation of. But then this is not an Absolute and Universal Exemption from the Princes Authority and Jurisdiction in Religious Matters: But only, in those things in which the Laws and the Worship of God, the Preservation of Religion, and either the very Being or the Regular Government of the Christian Church, according to Christ's Institution of it, are concerned. From whence will appear the Truth of our main Point now in

debate, viz.

3. That fuch an Independent Power in the Church, is no farther Inconsistent with the Supremacy of Authority in the State, than the Preservation and the due Practice of Religion according to Christ's Institution of it always make it fo. And that because, in all other things Christians stand in the very fame State and Condition in which they were before Christ came into the And must own and shew their World. Obedience and Subjection to the Laws of their Government, and the Just Jurisdicti-on of their Prince, as they would have been oblig'd to do, if no fuch Divine Charter or Commission had been given. And there-fore, to let the Reader see the contemptible Emptiness and Weakness of those little Reafonings with which this Author has endeavour d to Amuse the World in this Subject: H 2 I will I will shew him how easily his pretended Difficulties may be Reconciled, and how far the whole Body of the English Church and Clergy, who affert fuch a Divine Power in the Church, are from Disputing and Breaking in upon the Supreme Authority of

the State. To this end I observe,

1. That this Independent Power of the Christian Church, exempts no Man's Perfon from the Jurisdiction of the State, but binds the Clergy as well as other Men to be Subject to the Municipal Laws of their Country, and to fuffer the Punishment by those to be inflicted on the Transgressors of em. This I know is one of the main Difficulties with which our Adversary would embarrass all Pretenders to a Divine Independent Authority in the Church. But I can fee no consequence at all in his Reasonings to this purpole. He tells us indeed, that a Divine Independent Right to an Office wholly excludes the Magistrate from having a Right to put a Glergy-man to Death, because Page 37. in the deprivation of his Life, is included the Deprivation of all Offices and Employs what-Soever. A wise Gentleman on my Word, this is at close Reasoning! Where lies the ftress of all this mighty Argument? Why, if you take away his Life you take away his Office. No doubt on't. But you have no Power to take away his Office, Ergo, you have

have no Power to take away his Life. How does this Consequence appear? Or how will the Reason of these two hold both alike? The only Reason that I know of, why the Magistrate cannot Deprive a Man of a Divine Office is, that he has Authority from God to that Office, derived upon him not by the Civil Magistrates Power and Jurisdiction, but in another way Independent on All the Exemption then that fuch a Person can claim from the Magistrates Authority, is only to the due Execution of that Office, and to the Ends for which it was Ordain'd. But if a Clergy-man instead of attending strictly to his Holy Function, shall commit any thing worthy of Death or of Bonds: Let St. Paul, whose Commisin such a section of Bonds: Let St. Paul, whose Commisin such a section of the section of Bonds: Let St. Paul, whose Commisin such a section of the section in such a case he ought to Refuse Imprisonment or to Die. There is no common Sense in this way of arguing, unless Men would pretend that the Office was given to Countenance them in Iniquity, rather than to Empower'em to Minister unto God. The very Suggestion of which is a Prophane Reflection on the Wisdom and Goodness of God, who has Inflitured the Order. And yer this Wife way of Arguing our Adversary is fo Opinionated and Fond of: That he has mention'd it again and again in feveral Page 37, Pages of his Book.

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2. As our Persons are not so, neither are our Fortunes wholly Independent, and exempt from the Civil Magistrates Authority. But as we enjoy the common Benefit of our Princes Protection, with Additional Privileges in favour of our common Faith and Worship: So are we also liable to such Just and Equitable Impositions and Taxes in defence of our Country and Government as other Men; nor can we plead a Divine Right of Independency or Exemption from 'em. Altho' in Honour to our Sacred Funaion, and in a regard to our employing our Time and Labour for the Spiritual Good of our feveral Flocks: Most Governments have been Kind and Favourable to us in these Particulars, and exempted us from fome Civil Burdens that have lain on other Men. Something of this nature is provided for in most Christian Kingdoms and Countries. But all this by the Kindness and Payour of the State: Not by a Divine Charter and Authority from God.

3. As not our Persons nor our Fortunes, so neither are our Actions farther exempt from the Control of the Civil Power: Than the Laws of God, and the Divine Offices of Christian Worship and Duty, either directly or by consequence make em so. And therefore all the little pretended Absurdities and Inconsistencies which this Author

has

has mention'd in the first Chapter of his Book, as the main Pillars and Support of this Glorious Defign': Are only fo many trifling Amusements to entertain the Partial Unthinking and Injudicious part of Mankind with; and worthy of such an Author and fuch a Caufe. But have nothing of Solid Weight or Real Subfrance in them. Such for inflance, are

His Arguing that all Independent Power must be Supreme, and that two Independent Supremes are Impossible, because at this rate, one of 'em may oblige a Man to Do, and the other NOT TO DO a thing: Whereby the same Action shall at once become a Duty and a Sin. Or whereby a Man may be bound to be at the Camp and at the Church, before an Ecclefiastical and a Civil Tribunal at the same time. And as it once bappen'd at Edenburgh, that the Independent Kirk commanded a Fast on the Same Day that the King had oblig'd the Citizens to treat the Ambassadors of the French King at a Splendid Dinner. Now all this way of Reasoning is as Wild and Extravagant as the Scotch Kirks proceeding, and as Empty and Weak and Inconclusive as I would ever defire to meet with. And this every Body will be fensible of, who confiders that these Independent Powers of Church and State, are neither of them Absolutely Supreme, nor Universally H 4

Independent, but each of 'em Limited and Confin'd by Almighty God, from whom they both receive their Power, to fuch and fuch Particular Cases and Matters. And where either of 'em certainly takes place, the other in that particular Instance loses its Obligation. He rever sure ball advallen as

The Civil Magistrate is not Supreme by an Absolute and Unlimited Supremacy, but under God, and so far only as consists with the Obligation of his Divine Laws. And the Churches Authority is not Absolutely and Univerfally Independent, but so far only as the Divine Laws and Institutions of God are binding on the Consciences of Men. In all other cases it is oblig'd to act under the Civil Magistrates Government and Direction. And it is each of them knowing the true Bounds and Limits of their Jurisdiction: That makes two fuch Independent Authorities Confiftent and Reconcileable. In confequence of which, it is Impossible that the same Action should be at once both a Duty and a Sin. In that if the Church and State should happen to interfere in their Commands: Its most certain that they cannot be both of 'em obligatory at once. If the Command of my Prince, and the Necellary Service of my Country call me to the Camp: That must be enough to excuse me from my attendance at the Church what 3

at fuch a time. And if I am cited before an Ecclefiaftical and a Civil Tribunal at once: There must be somewhat very Extraordinary indeed, if my Obligation to the Civil Power which is Supreme, will not Excuse my Non-appearance before the Ecclefiaftical. If indeed the Preservation of Religion and of God's Church be at stake, so that I cannot with a Good Conscience comply with the Civil Magistrate: In such Singular and Extraordinary Instances my Obligation to his Power ceases. But, as this is what can but feldom or never happen, so when it does not, I am bound in my Conscience to be Govern'd and Directed in my Actions by the Civil Power. Let the Kirk of Scotland act in the case now mention'd, with as much Intemperate Heat and Zeal as they pleafe, we are under no Obligations to defend a Fact that was Unlawful and Undutiful, and is not to be Justified. The Civil Power has a Right to appoint Times and Days of Public Feafting and Fafting in every National Church, as shall thereby be judg'd fit; and the Church and Clergy are oblig'd in Confcience to comply therewith, and to conform thereto.

2. Of the like Nature is his next Pretence, wiz. That an Independent Power in Ecclesiastics Page 37. must have it in Gruit Affairs also; because all Supreme Power is Indivisible. Whereby an Independent

dependent Right to an Office, necessarily suppofes the same Right to the Place where, and to the Persons on whom, he is to exercise it. And fo the Magistrate cannot in any respect Debar his Exercise of a Function to which he has a Divine Right. All this is very true indeed, fo far as he acts according to his Divine Charter and Power from God, the Magistrate ought not to Deban him the exercise of his Function. But what will this Acute Gentleman infer from thence? Why that he who has a Divine Power in Ecclesiasticals has consequently all Power what soever. I deny the Confequence, and that for the Reason already alledg'd. That the Christian Churches Power is not Absolutely and Universally Independent, but limitted to the Duties of Religion and the Offices of the Church; and what by a necessary Consequence must be requir'd thereto. And I will make good my Argument in the very instances particularly mentioned by him. An Independent Right to an Office, fays he, necessarily Supposes a Right to the Place too where it is to be Evercifed. I grant it thus far, that they who are bound to worship God must be allowed both Time and Place to do it in. But where they cannot pretend a Divine Right to an Hour or a Day by Christian Institution if the Government shall think fit to allot them fuch Times of Worlbip, and fuch Places

Places in each City or Town as they Judge meet: They doubtless have Power and Authority fo to do, and the Christian Church

is oblig'd to submit to it.

So also as to Persons; its pretended, that an Independent Power in Ordination is Incon- Page 47. listent with the Magistrates Right to Protect the Common-wealth: Because they may put Men of the best Abilities to serve the Common-wealth, and such great Numbers of 'em too into Orders, as may tend to the Infinite Prejudice of the State. But what does he mean by an Independent Power in Ordination? Does he mean an Incontroulable Right to Ordain this, or that Particular Man, and any one whom they will, in Contempt, and Defiance of the Magistrates Authority, and Command to the contrary? I know of no fuch Divine Independent Power that the Church has All the Independent Power that I know of in the Christian Church as to Ordinaon, is this, that as it first began by a Divine Commission from God, in the Hands of an Establish'd Ministry of Divine Institution, and was thus to continue for ever: So none can Regularly be admitted to this Gospel Ministry, but by Ordination and Imposition of Hands, by those to whom Christ committed this Authority. The Power of admitting to the Function is lodg'd in the Bishops of the 6 6 4 4 4 G

the Church. But the Appointment and Defignation of the Persons to be Ordained, as it was Antiently made by the People, or at least with the Consent of the whole Asfembly: So it may now be in the Prince or Government. And how then is this Inconfiftent with the Princes Right to Protect the Common-wealth? My Eye I confess is not Piercing enough to discern the Consequence. The Bishops have the Power of Ordaining. and none can Regularly Ordain but they. But still they Exercise this Power under the Direction of the Civil Magistrate. If the Prince commands fuch a Person to be Ordain'd, and the Bishops have no just Objection against him, as to his Fitness and Qualifications for his Function: In this case the Prince is the Ruler, and the Bishop is the Subject; and then every Body fees where the Obedience is due. On the other hand, if the Prince requires such and such Men to the Service of the State, and thereupon Prohibits their Ordination: As the Christian Ministry does not depend on this or that Particular Man's Service; here also the Magistrate must be submitted to.

Again, whereas he pleads that such an Independent Power in the Church or Clergy, would give 'em a Right to Judge conconcerning all Laws, Legacies, and Contracts; and to lay on their Subjects what Taxes they please;

Page 48.

please; And that their Powers must needs Interfere, in that the Civil Magistrate cannot Command or Punish the Civil Subject, without Commanding or Punishing the Subject of the Ecclesiastical Magistrate. That such a Power Page 50. must give 'em a Right to Meet when and where they please, and to sit as long as they think fit: and so give the Ecclesiastical Governour a Power over the Temporal; These, with fome few more fuch like Pretences, when reduced to the same Principles of each Society having their distinct Province; and the Churches Obligation to act under the Rule and Direction of the Civil Magiffrate, except where the Duties of Religion and the Divine Institutions of the Christian Church bind to the contrary; will all of em very eafily admit of the same Answer. But because this Noble Performance argues rather from some Particulars in which their feveral Powers and Authorities occasionally may interfere, than in which they necessarily Will: I hope it will be thought a Satisfa-Ctory Answer to 'em all, to consider,

n. That there is a great Difference to be made between the due and Regular Exercise of any Power, and the Abuse of it. An Authentic Commission may be stretch'd too far, and extended beyond its just bounds. And as it is not to be dissembled, but that this has happen'd: So here indeed lies all the

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Difficulty in the Case before us. The Confiftency of the Power lays all in each knowing their own Bounds and the Just Limits of their several Jurisdictions. If these were rightly understood, and carefully observed, their Independent Authorities would never interfere. But altho' this has not been fo duly observed as it ought to be: Yet it does by no means follow, that the Christian Church has no Divine Rights, Authority, or Power, because they have been unhappily abused, and injustly made use of to encroach upon the Civil Government. Which, are not inconfistent with each other, but when one of them Invades the others Rights. And therefore

2. To prevent such clashing of their several Powers, these things are commonly Setled, and Provided for, and Adjusted at the Union and Incorporation of Church and State; that no Disputes or Controversies may easily arise about em. And what Inconsistency or Absurdity can there be in two Independent Powers acting by Consert, and each having their several Jurisdictions allotted them? And this is the Case as to Legacies, Wills, Administrations, &c. which we do not pretend a Divine, and Unalienable Right to: But only hold now by Perscription, and at first by the Concession of the Supreme Civil Power, which thought sit to lay

lay these things, in which Conscience is very much to be regarded, before such Spiritual Judges and Jurisdiction. And now I

think I need only add

3. Laftly, That, if after all this, an Extraordinary Unforeseen Case shall happen to arife, in which their Powers and Constitutions interfere: Each are bound to act according to their feveral Confciences. And the Actions of either fide will be Blameable. or Commendable, according to the Merits of the cause. And that Side whether Church or State that Encroaches on, or Invades the others Rights, and Authorities, will be Criminal. But, you will fay, who must Judge in such a case? I answer again, that if any fuch Difference arises as cannot be Adjusted. each must Judge for themselves according to the Sincerity of their Hearts, and as they will, and must answer it at the last Day before God. And as it is to be supposed that every Government will support its own Authority: So, if to that end it breaks in upon the Divine Laws or Institutions of Christianity: Instead of Protection it so far turns into Persecution; and the Christian's Duty is to take care of his own Innocence and Conscience: And wherever this is apprehended to be the case, the Civil Magistrate, and the Suffering Christian will each of 'em be found Criminal or Blameless, Justifiable.

or not Justifiable before God, according to the Merits of the Cause. If it be indeed God's Cause, and such as that they should act against the Laws and Duties of a Christian, in complying with the Laws and Constitutions of the Civil Power: Then they are in the Right to endure Persecution, and ought rather to fuffer any thing than to Sin against God. But on the other hand, if the Clergy or any other Christians are Mistaken in their Principles, and Err in their Opinions, and think that to be against the Laws of God and the Institutions of Christianity, which is not so; and thereby fuffer for that as God's Cause which is only their own Mistake: In this case they are Righteous overmuch, and may Rashly and Indiscreetly Destroy themselves. In which however they may be faved in the next World, according to the Sincerity of their Hearts: Yet they are not to be Justify'd in this, by reason of their Mistake in Principle and the Error of their Mind.

And now, how can such an Independent Power be pleaded Inconsistent with the Civil Magistrate's due exercise of his Supreme Authority over his Subjects: When if each knows and keeps his due Bounds they will never Interfere? And yet, if thro' Mistake on either hand they happen so to do: The Magistrates is the Temporal Sword by which

which it can Effectually support it self; and the Christian has nothing lest but to Flee or to suffer Persecution.

I have thus mention'd the most extraordinary Cases and Particular Niceties, and extreme Difficulties in which I think this Subject can happen to be concerned. And as there is nothing in the worst of it, if Men will all Honestly and Conscientiously, that can be Inconsistent with the due Exercise of the Civil Power in any Government: So, such Cases do no more conclude against the Real and Certain Authority of either Party, than a Dispute between two Kings about the Bounds and Limits of their Dominions, concludes against the Title of either of 'em to their whole Realm and Government.

These are such Difficulties as are not to cured by wholly taking away, and Destroying of the two Pretenders: But such as the Wise Providence of God has thought sit to leave for the Trial of the Sincerity, and Wisdom, and Honesty of Men. The Laws of Men may sometimes seem scarce Consistent with the Laws of God. And what then must be done in such a Case? Must one of their Powers be totally Removed and taken away, and either God be Renounced, or the Magistrare Deposed, and the

the Government be Dissolved: Because a Dissiculty may occasionally arise, that cannot be solved to all Parties Content and Satisfaction? No sure. Neither can our Adversary conclude, that the Christian Church has no Divine Rights, Authorities, or Powers: Only because the Divine Institutions of that and the Laws of the State, may sometimes happen to Interfere. And in all other Cases, the Christian Church and Clergy are in Conscience bound to be subject to the Civil Authority, and to act under its Jurisdiction and Direction.

And indeed, had there not been a long Chain of fuch loofe, fallacious, empty, deceitful Realonings drawn through this whole Antichristian-Book: I should have wonder'd much at this Author's infifting on fuch an Argument, and fuch a Pretence. Who at the same time allows all this Incontroulable Power and Authority to every Man's Private Conscience: Which he so zealously and furiously disallows in the Christian Church, and Clergy. And therefore, to let the World fee that his Zeal is not fo much to serve the Christian Prince and Magiffrate, as under that pretence to Countenance a Contempt of the Gospel and Irreligion: I think I may Defy him to produce me any one Difficulty, that does Really and Truly '

Truly attend our Christian Doctrin of the Divine Authority of the Church, and the Divine Institution of the Gospel Ministry: Which does not, at the least equally, attend his Modern Scheme of Principles, and Church Government, founded on the Natural Rights and Liberties of the People, and the Incontroulable Power of Conscience. I know very well that he in Words allows the Magistrare greater Power in Religion, and in Matters relating to the Church, than Page 21. to other Societies, fo far as the Public Good may feem to be concern'd. But then let me ask him, what if the Magistrate should think that Necessary for the Public Good, which his Subjects believe to be Sinful, and contrary to a Good Conscience to Comply with? Such cases may happen. What if the Magistrate shall think it Necessary to bind all his Subjects to be faithful to him by an Oath of Allegiance, and yet his Subjects believe in their Consciences that all Oaths are Unlawful? He knows that there are fuch Things as these in the World. Or what if when the Civil Magistrate decrees to Punish such and such Crimes with Death: The Subjects believe all Capital Punishments to be forbidden, and so will not execute his Laws? Nay, what if, for the Reafons already mention'd, the Subjects should

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be in their Consciences perswaded that it is not Lawful for a Christian to be a Magistrate, and to bear the Civil Sword? Who must give way? And how is all this Consistent with the Princes due Execution of his Authority and Government? Or how far will the Power of Conscience exempt every Private Man from his Obedience and Subjection to the Government? Why he tells us, that nothing can be more Obvious than that all are under an Indispensable Obligation, Page 14. in all Religious Matters whatever to follow the Dictates of their Consciences. And that none can make over this Right to another. Say you fo? Well, let that be granted. What then will you do with such People whose Principles and Consciences are thus totally Inconfiftent with a Wife and Good Government? I know nothing in all the Christian Churches Divine Commission and Clergies Divine Institution, that is near fo Prejudicial as this. And yet all this our Author feems to allow of. We turn his own Reafoning thus upon him. We do truly and fincerely in our Consciences believe the Divine Authority of the Christian Church. and the Divine Institution and Ministerial Power of the Christian Clergy; and that none regularly can or ought to Officiate in the Public Offices of Christian Worship:

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But those only who are thus Called and Ordain'd of God by the Bishops and Governors of his Church. And we claim this undoubted Right in these Religious Matters of Worshipping God according to our Consciences. And now, after all the Noise, and Din, and Bulle that this Author has made: What Service has his Book done the Civil Magistrate, or the Common wealth? Which allows that to the Natural Liberties and Private Consciences of all Men, be they of what Religion they will, whether Christian or Antichristian: Which yet when pleaded in behalf of the whole Church of God, and its Ministry, is presently condemn'd as Unlawful, Priestcraft and Usurpation. And what does it fignify to the Magiftrare whether the Christian Assemblies Power be by a Divine Commission from the Gospel, or by the Natural Rights, Liberties and Consciences of Private Men: When the Rights are made equally Unalienable, and the Powers equally Incontroulable? Such Principles may be of use to the Undermining, and pulling down Christianity, and all its Establishments: But can be of no Real Service or Advantage to any Christian Prince or Magistrate. The Gospel Institution is, I think, much more Reasonable and much more Advantageous, and as was faid

The Churches POWER, &c.

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in the beginning, when Rightly Understood and Observed : Is no more Inconsistent with the Supreme Power and Authority of the Magistrate and Government; than the Commands of God, and the Duties and Inflitutions of the Christian Gospel may always be pleaded to be fo. In all Instances where these bind, Religion must be preferr'd before secular Advantages, and God obey'd rather than Man, as all the World will eafily allow. But in all that vast Multitude of other Things or Actions, where the Laws of God have not an Antecedent Obligation, we are in Conscience bound to be Obedient to them that have the Rule over us, and to be Subject to their Authority, which is all that the Magistrates themselves can exped from us, or that this Author himfelf can pretend to be due unto them.

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Of the Divine Right or Power of Ordination.

TAving gone through the four things that I at first laid down to prove the Christian Churches Authority and Charter, in the Hands of a fetled Ministry of Divine Institution and Appointment, with a Divine Power and Authority in their Holy Function; and confider'd, in my way, the most Plausible Pretences which our Adversary has brought against all this: There remains now, I think, but one material Objection more against our Doctrin and Assertion. And it is this, that the Power of Ordaining Ministers, which we have thus afferted, and pleaded to have been first in the Apostles, and after them in the Bishops, as deriving such Power of Ordination from the Apostles; our Adversary would have to have been in the People and the Ministers to have Derived, and Received all their Authority from them. His Words are these, What's more requir'd to give one a Right to Page 80. Exercise the Office of a Minister in any Particular Congregation, than an Agreement among

them to chuse a Person capable, and willing to take upon him that Function, and consent to hear him say Prayers, Preach and Administer the Sacraments? And after the same Reasons for Depriving or Deposing him, he adds, This Private Churches may do by a Right N A-

Page 81. TURAL to all Societies what soever. This they must have a right to do before National Churches came in use.—All the Right they

Page 233. have is derived from the People, because upon their Male-administration they may deprive them of this Right, &c. It can belong only to the

Page 237. People to appoint their own Ecclesiastical Officers, since tis for their sake that any Officers of that Nature are instituted, and tis their Interest alone which is concern'd, and their Good or Ill depends on the Choice of their Ministers.—

And therefore there's no need of any particular Texts of Scripture to prove this Power belongs to the Church, since 'tis an Inherent Fundamental Right of all Communities.

This Plea of Natural Right, he attempts to defend by Primitive Practice; 'Tis plain, fays he, by the General Epiftles that all Church-

Page 158 before these were written, exercising this Power; for they voted not only in the Election of Deacons, but even when a Person was chosen to the Apostleship, it was determined by their Suffrages. If any Christian, as has been already proved, says

Page 355. he, may exercise any Ecclesiastical Function, if

fet apart by the People for that purpose, and Infinite Absurdities follow from not allowing them the Liberty of Making and Unmaking their own Ministers; the Custom of their having the Approbation of Some Bishops, before they are ad-Page 356. mitted to the Exercise of their Office, can't be of Divine Appointment. Much less can the Power of Making Bishops and Priests, be indelibly fixt in all or any of 'em. But it being a Custom among the first Christians, which they borrow'd of the Jews, when a Request was offer'd to God in behalf of any one of the Congregation, for those only who officiated to lay hands upon him, it being inconvenient for the whole Number to do it; and this being observed when a Person was fet apart by the People for the Ministry, the Clergy, because they laid hands on him when the Congregation Pray'd that God would affift him in the discharge of his Office, would have their Performing that Ceremony (which could not fignify their then Constituting an Ecclesiastical Officer, but that he was already constituted) a Pretence for claiming the Sole Power of making him. And the Bishops aped the Apostles almost in every thing; and so no wonder that at last Page 357. the Bishops should get the Sole Power to themselves of making Ecclesiasticks, on pretence that it belongs to them to Ordain them. These are our Adversary's Notions and Principles of the Peoples sole Right and Power in Ordaining, or as he loves to express himself in Mak-

ing Ministers. In all which, he owns the very Antient Appointment and Use of a ferled Ministry to officiate in the Divine Offices of Public Worship, and the Early Cuftom of Impolition of hands by the Apollles and their Successors upon the Persons Ordain'd or Appointed. But because these Persons on whom Hands were thus Solemnly laid, were fuch as had been also chosen by . the People: He will needs have it, that they who had the Nomination or Delignation of the Person, had also the Committing Authority to him; and that he acted only by the Power of those Persons by whom he was Elected, and not by any Authority from the Apostles and Bishops, who by Imposition of hands admitted him to this Function. And the clearing of this fingle Point thus in debate, will, I think, fet us in a true Light as to the Divine Right, and Power of Ordination. Now, he having founded the chief of his Arguments in defence of this Caule,

1. On the Peoples Suppos'd Natural, Fundamental Right of Making their Ministers, Page 237 without any need of Particular Texts of Scrip-

ture to prove it. And

2. Confirming this by some Scriptures that mention the People as chasing their Officers, for so is his Word; and from that Election inferring that their Power is wholly deriv'd

deriv'd from those who chose them, making the Imposition of hands by the Apostles, or the Bishops their Successors, to have been only a Jewish Ceremony us'd in Prayer for them: In answer to all this, I shall

1. Grant the Antient Cuftom of the Peoples Choice, or Confent in the Appointing or Ordaining of Ministers. Not that our Adversary can prove from Scripture that it was Univerfally fo; but only, as it is not Improbable, but that the Practice which is fo Particularly mention'd at the first Appointing of Deacons, might also for the most part be continu'd in other Cases. Especially, the Fathers also bearing Witness to fuch a receiv'd Custom in the Church. But then,

2. It does by no means from hence follow, that the Perfons so chosen receiv'd all their Power and Authority to their Function from their Electors. In that there are a great many Cases and Instances in which, the Nomination of the Person to be Authoriz'd is from one hand, and yet the Conveyance of the Authority by which he acts is from another. Which in short is no more than an action of Courteous Respect, or Tender Regard in the Person who has Power to Appoint and Constitute such a Minister: That he will not use his Authority in an Arbitrary manner, but suffer the People among

ing Ministers. In all which, he owns the very Antient Appointment and Use of a serled Ministry to officiate in the Divine Offices of Public Worship, and the Early Cufrom of Impolition of hands by the Apollles and their Successors upon the Persons Ordain'd or Appointed. But because these Persons on whom Hands were thus Solemnly laid, were fuch as had been also chosen by , the People: He will needs have it, that they who had the Nomination or Delignation of the Person, had also the Committing Authority to him; and that he acted only by the Power of those Persons by whom he was Elected, and not by any Authority from the Apostles and Bishops, who by Imposition of hands admitted him to this Function. the clearing of this fingle Point thus in debate, will, I think, fet us in a true Light as to the Divine Right, and Power of Ordination. Now, he having founded the chief of his Arguments in defence of this

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among whom he is to officiate to give Testimony and Approbation of his sitness for his Function. Thus the Patron of a Living may leave the Parish to Chuse or Nominate that Minister whom he will Present: And yet the Authority of the Presentation is in the Patron, and not in the People. Nay again, tho' the Patron Presents, yet the Minister does not Officiate wholly by the Patron's Power, who had only the Right of Nomination: But by Authority from the Bishop who Institutes him, and indeed whose Curate and Substitute he is So Common a thing is it, for one to Chuse, or Nominate the Person, and another to Convey to him his Authority.

3. As the Election, or Nomination of the Persons to be Ordain'd does neither Necessarily, nor Universally include or suppose their deriving Power and Authority to their Function from those who chose them: So that it does not in the Particular Cafe now before us, is Evident from their being admitted to the Exercise of their Office, by that Imposition of hands, which was us'd not only among the Jews, but even by the Apostles themselves, and the Bishops their Successors in Ordaining Ministers. But because this Author would make this Solemn Rite, to have been little or nothing else than a Jewish Ceremony us'd in Prayer, and to have been

been done by the Clergy in the designation of Men to an Office in the Name or Right of the whole Congregation, when the whole Number could not Conveniently do it : I will now un-

dertake to prove,

1. That this Imposition of hands was not a meer Empty Ceremony us'd in Prayer, but the Solemn Rite of Confecrating, or Devoting and Configning a Thing or Perfon to the Service of God, and in Persons the Actual Conveyance of Power and Authority to 'em.

2. That this was not done in the Right of the People, who never had any Power, or

Authority fo to do.

3. Lattly. That what the Apostles and the Bishops their Successors thus did, they had Authority to do, and did it by virtue of that Commission and Power which they re-

ceiv'd from Christ and from God.

1. That this Imposition of hands was not a meer Empty Ceremony, but the Solemn Right of Confecrating, or Devoting, and Configning a Thing, or Person to the Service of God. And in Persons, the Actual Conveyance of Power and Authority to 'em. This was the true Import of Laying hands on the Sacrifice to be Slain; it was the Actual Devoting it to God, and Substituting it in the room or place of him whose Sacrifice it was. And for this reason, Hands were not

not laid on the Sacrifice by all the Congregation, except when it was the whole Congregations Sacrifice, as in the Sin-offering, Levit. 4. 15. nor by the Priest as the Congregations Representative or Trustee, but only when it was the Priest's Offering, as Exod. 29. 11. but by the very Person who offer'd the Sacrifice, as his Solemn Act of Devoting and Confecrating it to God. And as the Learned Mr. Le Clere tells us from Theodoret, This was a Symbol, or Sign that this Sacrifice was in the place of him that offer'd it. and flain in his flead. But what is most to our Purpose, is his Remark upon this Antient Rite of thus Devoting their Sacrifices, which he derives from the Cultom of thus Ordaining, or Appointing Men to any Office, or Function. Ritus ille cum adhiberetur vulgo inter homines, ad designandum sibi in munere Successorem &c. This Rite being commonly us'd among Men in Appointing ones Successor in an Office; on whom, he that laid Hands, did transfer, and lay the Burden of his Function, which before was upon himself: I am of Opinion, fays he, that the Same Imposition of hands was us'd also in their Sacrifices to denote the Substituting of 'em in their place and stead. He accounts for this Rite in their Sacrifices from the known and establish'd Custom of thus Transferring an Office and Conveying the Power and Authority thereunto belonging.

In Exod.

Honour

ing. And acordingly we find that when the Levites were to be Consecrated to God Numb. 3. instead of the First-born, the Children of Israel 12. put their Hands on them, not by a Natural, Inherent, Fundamental Right of chusing their own Ministers, common to all Societies, but by the express Institution and Appointment of God, who thus Commanded, And thou shalt bring the Levites before the Lord, and the Chil-10, 11. dren of Ifrael, who were now Devoting and Confecrating 'em to God instead of their First-born, Shall put their Hands upon the Levites, and Aaron shall offer the Levites before the Lord. Imposition of hands by God's own Command, respecting no doubt the establish'd Custom among them, is made the Solemn Rire, or Ceremony of Confecrating them to God, and conveying their Holy Function to 'em. The fame was us'd also by Moses in Ordaining Josbua to succeed him. And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Jo-Num. 27. Thua the Son of Nun, a Man in whom is the 18, 19,20. Spirit of the Lora, and lay thine Hand upon him. To what end? Why to Ordain, and Appoint him as the Successor in his Office. And that Solemn Rite is fo well known, that a Command to lay hands on him, is but in other words a Command to Ordain him. And fet him before Eleazar the Priest, and before all the Congregation, and give him a charge in their fight. And thou shalt put off thine

Honour upon him, that all the Congregation of Israel may be Obedient. And Moses did as the Lord Commanded him, and he took Joshua and fet him before Eleazar the Priest, and before all the Congregation. And he laid his Hands upon bim, and gave him a Charge, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses. And from whom now, I pray, did Josbua receive his Authority? from the Congregation or from God? Bring this then to the Apostles, and the Bishops their Successors, who are known to have laid Hands on the Persons admitted into the Public Ministry of the Church: And the known Meaning and Use of that Solemn Imposition of hands will tell every Fair and Impartial Judge from whom those Ministers must derive the Power and Authority of their Function.

But because the Author of this late Book would infinuate that this laying on of Hands was only done by the Clergy, because it was Inconvenient for the whole Number of the People

to do it: I must beg leave to tell him

2. That the People neither had, nor could have any Right, Power, or Authority so to do. They could commit no more Power or Authority to the Ministers, than what they themselves had a Right to Exercise. Let our Adversary then, if he can, prove that all the People in Common had a Right to the Ministerial Offices of Divine Worship

Worship in the Christian Congregation. But let him do it by fome stronger Proofs and better Arguments than what he has hitherto brought for that purpose. Let him not tell us with that uncommon Affurance which he has us'd on this occasion, that without need of any Text of Scripture to prove it, it's the Natural, Inherent, Fundamental Right of all Communities to chuse their own Ministers: Till he can prove that it is the Natural, Inherent, Fundamental Right of all Private Christians to Officiate, and Perform all those Ministerial Acts themfelves, if they so please. And when he goes about this, let him Reconcile it with the Divine Charter of the Gospel, on which the Church is founded; and the Nature of the Offices there to be Perform'd. Let him give me but any one tolerable Argument to prove, that any Man has a Natural Right to Act in God's Name, and make Obligatory Covenants for him, without a Commission from Heaven, impowering him fo to do; and that will fatisfie me. If not, he must then Renounce the Pretended Claim of a Natural Right, as that which can never hold, unless he can destroy both the very Nature of a Christian Church and Christian Sacraments.

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The only way then for him to maintain this Caufe, is to forego this groundless and even Ridiculous Claim to a Natural, Inherent, Fundamental Right: And to prove, if he can, from Scripture and Antiquity, that God has committed the Privilege of Appointing Ministers to the whole Church in Common, and not by the Hands of the Apostles and their Successors. But how will he prove this? Or what will be the Consequence of it? In his Attempt to prove this, he must Reconcile it with the Commission given to the Apostles, and their Practice upon it, and the true Import of Impolition of Hands by 'em, and the Testimony of the Primitive Church and Fathers in this matter. And when he has done all this, the Function will appear still of Divine Authority and Power, as Inflituted by the Divine Command and Appointment of God, let the Commission, or Charter upon which they Practife be lodg'd where it will; whether in the Bishops or in the People. But to shew more plainly yet, that the People, or Congregation of Christians had no such Power or Authority as this Author pretends, what more can be requir'd than to make it appear,

3. Lastly. That this was the Peculiar Right and Privilege of the Apostles and their Successors; and that what they did in

this

this matter, was done by virtue of that Commission and Authority which they receiv'd from Christ and from God? And to this end let us

1. Remember what has been faid above, as to the true Import and Defign of our Saviour's Commission. Which, let this Gentleman pretend what he will to the contrary, being to continue as long as the Gospel was to continue to be Preach'd, cannot be fulfill'd but by a Succession of Ministers. And being given to the Apostles when they alone were met together, and not all the Disciples, with 'em, shews, I think, as plainly as any Reasonable Man can defire, especially when joyn'd with the Apostles Practice upon it: that it was to Them that Christ committed this Power of Providing for a Lafting Succession of Ministers in the Church. that what they did of this kind was in perfuance and by virtue of that their Commission and Charter. But this has been sufficiently fpoken to above. Let us then confider next

2. That the Scripture all along ascribes the Appointing and Authorizing all Ministers, not to the People who chose them: but to the Apostles, or their Successors who did, or were to lay Hands on them. The most Remarkable Testimony of the Peoples Election was in the first Appointing of Dea- Acts 6.

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And yet it is to be particularly taken notice of, that for all the Peoples Choice, the Authoritative Designation of 'em to their Office, was Apparently and Undeniably in the Apostles. Chuse you out seven Men of good Report, whom we may Constitute, or Appoint over this Business. Whom they set before the Apostles, and when they had pray'd they laid their hands on them. I have before prov'd Deacons to have been from the beginning, Ministers of the Gospel. And the known Intent of this Solemn Rite, shews plainly who it was that Authoriz'd them to their Function. They who fo Solemnly laid Hands upon 'em in persuance of their former Proposal: Chuse you seven Men whom we may Appoint over this Business. The People Nominared, and the Apostles Authoriz'd them. So again when Paul and Barnabas had, I think, not their Ordination, but rather their Especial Mission to a Particular Ministry Appointed them by the Holy Ghost; yet that all things might be done Decently and in Order in the Church of God, they are Appointed or fet apart to this Office, not by the People, but by the Prophets and Teachers, who are particularly nam'd. Who were then Ministring unto the Lord, and Authoriz'd these two Persons to their Ministry by Solemn Impolition of hands, after Prayer and Fasting: altho' they had been call'd to

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V. 3. Καζαςήσωμεν. V 6.

that Province by the express Revelation and Direction of the Holy Ghost. Separate me Acts 13. Barnabas and Saul for the work of the Ministry 1, 2, 3. whereunto I have call'd them; and when they had Fasted, and Prayed, and laid Hands on them, they fent them away. So also when these two Apostles persuant to this their Extraordinary Mission had converted many in the Cities of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch; 'tis faid: And when They had Ordain'd them Elders in every Church, and had Prayed with Fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they believ'd. Pray who was it that Ordain'd these Elders? No other than They, the very same Apostles, who by their Preaching had converted them. And that too by Imposition of hands. Xeeesovirantes, having Constituted them, not by common Vote or Suffrage as the Antient Greeks understood the Word: But by that very laying on of Hands, which from God's own Appointment among the Jews was become the Customary Rite of Ordaining Ministers to any Holy Office, and of transferring Power and Authority to 'em therein. Thus all along in Scripture, the Authoritative Commissioning of any Ministers, is ascrib'd not to the People, but to the Apostles, or their Successors, who laid Hands on 'em; As the Apostles, and not as the Peoples Representatives. For this Tit. 1. 5. purpose I left thee in Crete, that thou mightest K 3

Ordain

> Ordain Elders, and set in order the things that are wanting. The Charge is given to Titus, and he is to take care of the Executing these Orders, altho' I doubt not but that the Congregations also were Consulted in them, even when the Authority was not Entirely theirs. So also to Timothy; The things that Thou hast heard of me, the same Commit Thou to Faithful Men, who shall be able to Teach others. Let our Author Confider these Words well, and then tell me in whose Right Timethy was to Appoint Preachers, in his own, as a Succes-

for of the Apostles, or in the Peoples?

3. It still feems to me more Evident from the miraculous Gifts that usually attended their Imposition of Hands in Ordination, that the Power and Authority to these Holy Offices was convey'd by them. I take it to be in Allusion to this very Thing, that St. Paul grounds his Advice to Timothy. Stir up the Gift of God that is in thee, by the putting on of my Hands. And again, Neglett not the Gift which is in thee, which was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery. Both which Places feem very fairly to Intimate to us, that fuch Gifts and Graces and Extraordinary Endowments attended this Imposition of Hands by the Apostles, in the Constituting of Bishops and Pattors: whereby they were made capable of Executing the Office, and fulfilling the Truft 2530

2 Tim.

2 Tim.

2. 2.

I Tim.

4. 14.

Truft, which the Holy Spirit of God had thus committed to 'em. Which was indeed not only to Qualify them for their Function. but also to bear Witness to their Power in the Execution of it, and to attest the Authority with which they were invested. But from whom then must these Gifts and this Authority be deriv'd? From God, or from the People? From God most certainly, if convey'd by the Imposition of the Apostles Hands. And in this St. Paul is very express. The Gift of God that is in thee by the laying on of my Hands. Let me conclude and Confirm all this by that further Proof, which methinks must be of the greatest moment to our farther Satisfaction. I mean and the vice stand

4. Lastly. The Sense and Testimony of the Primitive Church and Fathers in this matter. Whose Evidence must be of the greatest Weight in a Dispute of this Nature, by the Perfect Knowledge which they had, both of the Sense of the Apostles Institutions, and of the Constant Practice of their own, the Earliest and the Purest Times. To whom then do they ascribe the Authoritative part of the Ministerial Ordination. To the Apostles and Bishops, or to the People? Or what is their Sense and the Account which they give of the Congregation's Approbation, Consent, or Choice in this Assair? Clemens Romanus

I Ep.

Romanus sin Words cited before tells us, 5. 43, 44. That the Apostles being fent by Christ, according to the Will of God, and Preaching thro Countries and Cities: They Ordain'd Bishops and Ministers, or Deacons out of the first Fruits of their Conversion, having first Prova them by the Spirit. Where their Ordination is undeniably afferted as from the Apostles, who had the miraculous Gift of Difcerning by the Holy Spirit what Perfons were fit to be admitted. But he goes on thus. And what Wonder is it, that those who were entrusted with fuch a Work by God, as the Apostles was, appointed the afore-mention'd Ministers? The Apostles, that is, who were entrusted by Almighty God with the great Work of Propagating and Establishing Christianity, appointed the aforesaid Ministers. Again, They pave direction how other Gelebrated Men, upon their Decease, (bould succeed in their Ministry. And tho' it's true, that mention is made of the Confent of the Church, yet the Apostles are chiefly spoken of as the Center of this Power, and under Christ the Spring of this Authority. And when by Ignatius the Bi-Ad Smyr. Shop is mention'd as Presiding in the place of

God, without whom nothing belonging to the Ad Mag-Church is to be done; and the Presbyters in the stead of the Council, or College of the Apostles: Judge I pray from whom we must believe the Ministers to receive the Ministerial

Power

Power and Authority of their Function. Irenaus giving Advice what Ministers were in his Days chiefly to be regarded: tells us, those who have Succession from the Apostles, and with that Succession the certain Gift of Truth ac- L. 4. cording to the Will of the Father. And in an- c. 43. 45. other place, according to the Succession of Bi- Ibid 63. shops, to whom they, that is, the Apostles, committed the Church that is in every place. But St. Cyprian, whose Testimony our Author, of his usual Simplicity and Sincerity has thought fit to produce on his fide: Gives us the Plainest and most Satisfactory account, what the true Reason, and Business, and Meaning of the Peoples Election, or Confent was. I decreed, fays he, in the beginning of Ep. 14. my, being made a Bishop, to do nothing without ed. Ox. the Advice of you, (my Presbyters and Deacons) and the Confent of my People. But to what End was this Consent of the People ask'd or requir'd? Why, he tells us thus. In the Ordination of Ministers we were wont to Ep. 38. Confult you Brethren, and so in a Common Con-Sultation to Judge of the Manners and Merits of every one. This was the true and only Reason of it. Andyet even this was not fo necessarily requir'd, but that a Bishop might Ordain in some Cases without it. For says he in the next Words, We respect not the Testimony of Men, when we have before-hand the Approbation of God. And how I pray could they derive their

their Authority from the People who were Ordain'd without either the People's Approbation, or Consent? Or how could that Ordination be Valid and Justifiable, if the Apostles had not the Power of Ordaining without the Congregations leave? And all this was said only because the Person Aurelius had approv'd his Character by his Constancy in Persecutions, and so wanted no farther Testimonials. In another place, alluding to God's command to Moses to set Aaron and Eleazar before the Congregation. Numb. 20. 25. He speaks thus, God teaches us in this, that the Ordination of Ministers ought not to be without the Approbation of all the Congregation present: That their Crimes

Ep. 67.

all the Congregation present : That their Crimes may be detected, or their Deferts declared in the Presence of all the Community: That Ordination being Regular and Right, which is with the common Approbation and Judgment of all. And speaking again in the same Epistle of the Apostles referring the choice of Deacons to the People: He tells us, that it was done that no unfit Person might creep into the Ministry. But, must we therefore from hence conclude, that these Deacons or other Ministers derived all their Authority and Function from the People, and not from the Apostles? No, he tells us the contrary. That the Apostles, after our Saviour's Ascenfion into Heaven, ordain'd them to be Ministers,

Ep. 3.

or Helpers to them, and to the Church in their Episcopal Charge. And if this, the very Lowest Order of the Gospel Ministry derived their Office and Authority, not from the People that Recommended, Nominated or Chofe them; but from the Apostles who by Imposition of Hands admitted them thereto: Much more Reasonably might St. Cyprian fay, as he does, of Bishops and of Presbyters, that they are Successors to the Apostles, Ordinarioby Virtue of an Ordination originally derived ne succes from them. And when it shall be consi-dunt. Ep 66. der'd again, that all this is from that Commission and Power which the Blessed Jesus before his Ascension gave his Apostles to this very end: Then let every Honest and Impartial Reader Judge both from Reason, Scripture and Antiquity: Where the Right and Power of Constituting, and Ordaining Christian Ministers is lodg'd? Whether in the Apostles and Bishops their Successors, who are Confessed to have laid Hands on 'em in that Solemn Manner which even by God's own Ordinance had been long used in transferring such Authority, and who also by that Imposition of Hands gave the necessary Gifts of the Holy Ghoft, and who are also expelly said to have Ordained 'em: Or in the People, of whom no fuch Expressions are used, who in their Natural Capacity alone could not, and

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140 Of the Divine Right of Ordination.

by the Divine Institutions of the Gospel do not appear ever to have obtain'd a Right to fo Sacred and Solemn a Work? The Confideration of all which confirms me still the more in my belief, that the Christian Church was not Originally built on the fandy Foundation of Natural Rights and Liberties alone, but on the firm Rock, of an extraordinary Commission and Charter from Heaven, in the Hands of an Establish'd Ministry of Divine Institution. According to the Commandment and Appointment of God, in whose Name they act, and from whom they receive Power and Authority to exercise the solemn Offices of their Holy Function. And as the Truth of these things cannot, I think, fairly and reasonably be denied; it concerns all those of looser Principles among us as to Church Power and Authority, and who too much favour this Anti-christian Notion of a Priesthood in common; and think with our Author that nothing more is Necessary to Authorize a Minifter than his own Abilities to the Function: and the People's choice of him. It concerns them I fay, and I would earnestly recommend it to their Consciences and to their most ferious. Thoughts, and from my Heart most affectionately Importune them to reflect: how they dare to officiate in the Name and as by the Authority of God, who are not

not called in that Proper, Regular way, which Christ Jesus, the Author of our Salvation and the Head of the whole Church, has by his own Apostles Instituted, and Appointed for the Sending and Authorifing of his Ministers. Or how they can pretend to be duly and regularly called, who do either Intrude themselves into these Offices, without Direction or Authority from any other Christians whatsoever. Or if from any, from those who, it is plain, could have no Power or Authority in such a case. Let em search the Holy Scriptures and other most Early and Antient Ecclesiastical Writings Carefully and Impartially. And let 'em from thence acquaint themselves with the Doctrins and Practice of the Apostles, and the Primitive Church. And then, if they can thus Reconcile the Principles of this late Book, and the Practices that it favours in this particular of a Priesthood in common, with the Constitutions and Practices of the Church of Christ, for the first Hundred Years after our Saviour's Death, in which time it was too much in the Hands of the Apostles and Apostolical Men, to suffer any Innovations of this great Importance: I dare, on this Condition, Covenant with them, and fland Engaged, to Renounce my own Orders, and to become one of them.

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But if this cannot be done, let them then confider again, that there is as much reason to fay of the Christian Priesthood and Gospel Ministry, as there could be of the Tew-Heb. 5: 4. ish: That no Man taketh this Office unto himfelf, but he that is called of God as was Aaron. And that the Great God and Terrible, who has given Testimony how Zealous he is to Vindicate the Authority of his Divine Infritutions and Establishments under the Law, by his Wonderful and Aftonishing Vengeance on Uzzab, Corab, Dathan, Abiram, and Uzziah, for their Intrusion into the Levirical Priefthood; can never look upon the Bold and Rash Invaders of the more Important Offices of the Christian Church, with an Indifferent and Unconcern'd Eye. But will most certainly call 'em to a severe account for it in another World, the' they feem never to securely to Escape the fruits of his Displeasure in this. comming with the Conflitutions and Mu-

chos of the Church of Christ, for fix and Finner of Years after our Saviourly De chista

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CHAP. VI.

Of the lasting Obligation of Apostolical Institution in the Case of the Bishops and Clergy.

I Hope that the foregoing Chapters have in some tolerable measure made good the Truth of what I undertook to prove in them. I mean the Divine Authority of the Christian Church in General, and the Divine Institution of the Christian Ministry in Particular.

The next thing to be consider'd is, the lasting Obligation of these Things, and the Necessity of continuing them in such a State, as the Apostles Put and Lest them in, to After-ages and other Countries. And this I must necessarily speak to, in that the Author I write against, as the Conscious that a great deal might very Reasonably be pleaded against his Notions and Principles from the Primitive State of the Church, has endeavour'd to ward off the Blow, and to Fence against all such Arguments and Reasonings by such Expressions and Pretences as these.

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Chap. 4.

All Ecclesiastical Discipline, that is, all Page 123. Things relating to the Government and Policy of the Church must be Mutable, as the Means conducing to an End, and undergo, from time to time such Alterations, as are best suted to the Ends it was instituted for .- No Particular Form of Ecclesiastical Discipline can be so Proper at all Times and Places as some others. -For when any Circumstances happen which cause Means to lose the Fitness they had before: God by rausing those Alterations does as much take off the Obligation, as if he had expresty declared it ; since Acts do as fully express the Mind as Words. - And to be tied up to any

Page 124. particular Form of Ecclesiastical Discipline, is inconsistent with the Law of Nature, and the Infinite Wisdom of God, which Required Means most adapted to the Ends they are designed to promote. The same Garment may as well serve Children and Men, as the same Regimen can fit People for all Times and Circumstances. Cloaths made of Beasts-skins may now as well be pretended to be of Divine Obligation, because God himself so Cloathed our first Parents, as any particular Deceline be now binding, because Religion was a first cloathed with it. And a-

gain in another place; All we are to learn §. 40. Page 152. from the Discipline of the Primitive Christians, or the Direction they received from Inspired Persons, is, not that we are obliged to observe the same, but, that like them we act agreeably to

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the Circumstances we are in. 'Tis not there. 45. fore enough for those who assirm the People are Page 156. Divested of the Power of managing their Ecclesiastical Concerns, according to the general Rules of the Gospel, to shew that the Government they contended for was of the Apostolical Age, or that there are Commands of Submitting to it, for so there are to the Roman Emperors. No, they ought to produce some Positive Depriving Law, reaching to all Christians in all Ages, as Plain and Express as the Law of Nature, which gives the People this Right, and it ought as plainly to appear in what set of Men this Power is Immutably invested.

The true intention of all which is to perfwade us, that Apostolical Practice and Institution has no binding Obligation to Afterages. And consequently, that whatsoever we meet with of this kind in the Government and Discipline of the Primitive Church: Must not be lookt on as an Obligatory Pattern binding us to the same Observances: But only as Prudential Acts accommodated to their Times and Circumstances; and that leave us also at liberty to make what Changes and Alterations in them we may think sit, to accommodate them to ours.

Now had all this been faid in regard to that part only of Church Policy, or Discipline which respects the Laws, Rules, Canons, and Constitutions of the Church, as to Times, Places, Habits, Rites and Ceremonies of Divine Worship: The Argument had been good. Because as these Things in the very Nature of them do not fute all Ages and Places alike; but what is Decent and Orderly, and carries a plain Evidence of Veneration and Reverence at one Time, and in one Place, does not always do so in another, but perhaps the contrary: So for this Wise and Good Reason, our Gracious God of his Infinite Wisdom has not thought fit to give any other Express and Positive Laws about these Matters; than that General one of doing all things Decently, and in Order, and to Edification. Which leaves it to the Prudential Determination and Management of every National Church, by its Governours, to Appoint fuch Particulars as they Judge meet. But these Sayings and Pleadings are defigned by our Author to another purpose. The consequence of them he tells us is. 1. That no Particular Set of Men

Page 174. can have a Divine Right in the Government of

Page 126. the Church,&c. And they are apparently urg'd in defence of the Peoples Right to Determine who shall exercise all Ecclesiastical Offices, and

against their belonging by Divine Right to any Particular Set of Men, and whom they adopt into their Body. And they are more especially urg'd, 2dly. Against Episcopacy and an Episcopal Form of Government, being so far of Apostolical

Apostolical Institution, as to put us under any obligation of continuing it in these later Ages of the World. It is upon these Principles that he tells us, it was Prudently done of the Reformers in Jeveral Places, knowing Page 125. how the People were set against Bishops by Reason of their Tyranny, to alter the Form of Church Government. The Obligation to which he thinks to be Mutable, and the continuance of which he efteems fo very Needless and Unnecessary: That, says he, To make any fet of Ecclesiasticks (suppose Bishops! necessary to the being of a Church, is to make all that are without them to be Unchurched. And to fay, the Purest Faith, &c. will not avail to the Health of Mens Souls, without this. or that Set of Ecclesiasticks, is as Absurd, as to suppose the most wholsome Meat will not Nourish the Body, because the Cook who dress'd it, was not made one with such Formalities, &c. Now this being our Author's chief Aim and Drift in all these Pleadings against the Obligatory Force of Apostolical Institutions and Practice to After-ages: My present Business will chiefly be,

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I. To give the Reader a Fair and Impartial View of the Obligatory Force of the Apostles Practice in both these Cases mention'd. That of the Ministry in General, and of Episcopacy in Particular. And L 2 thereby thereby to let him see how far the Continuance of each of these is, or is not Necessary to the Regular Being of a Church, and Administration of its Discipline and Government. And then

II. To answer the chief Objections which this Author in several Places of his Book has brought against all this.

1. That I may give the Reader a Fair and Impartial View of the Obligatory Force, and Necessary Continuance of each

of these. I shall

1. Speak to the Apoltolical Institution of a Gospel Ministry in General. And taking it for granted that what has been faid already in the foregoing Chapters, has fufficiently evinced that a Priesthood in common was a thing altogether unknown among the Apostolical Constitutions of the Primitive Church; But that they and their Successors did appoint a Set of Ecclefiafticks, as our Author loves to speak, to officiate in all the Divine Offices of it: The lasting Obligation of fuch an Institution, and the Necessary Continuance of fuch a Ministry, and so Appointed and Ordained will be feen in these two things; which wherever they concur, will always and in all Cases make Apostolical Institutions and Practice to be Perpetually binding,

binding, and to have the lasting Obligation of a Divine Law.

1. That such Apostolical Institution or Practice was not a mere Prudential Act proceeding only from Human Counsel and Advice: But a Peculiar part of their Apostolic Function to which they were directed by God's Holy Spirit, and Empowered by the Divine Commission which they received from him.

2. That the Reason of such a Gospel Ministry, and so Appointed and Ordained continues still the same, and, ordinarily speaking, must and will continue still the same to these and all other After ages.

Where these two things concur the Obligation of fuch Ordinances will continue still in force, and make them fo far Unalterable and Immutable Laws. Now as to the Divine Apostolical Institution of a Gospel Miniftry: I have made good the Truth of all this already. I have shewed you that the Apostles had from Christ that very same Commission for Gathering a Church on Earth, which Christ himself received from the Father. That by this Commission they were Authorized by Almighty God both to Preach, and Baptize, and perform all other Divine Offices in the Christian Church. That this was not a Temporary Commission peculiar to their Persons only, but a Last-

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ing, Perpetual one, that was to continue as long as the Christian Church should have Being in the World; and confequently must include the Lasting Continuance of their Power and Authority; in their Successors when their Persons sailed. That in persuance of this Commission they Ordained Presbyters and Deacons in every Church. That the Presbyters fo ordained are by St. Paul himself said to be made Overseers of the Church by the Holy Ghost; an Expression which plainly attests that their Power was derived from God and not from the People. That however the Nomination, or Election of fuch Ministers be by the consent of each Particular Church: Yet that their Ordination, or Authorifing them to their Fun-Gion was either by the Apostles themselves, or those who succeeded them in that part of their Commission. That the Provision which the Holy Scripture thus made, the very Nature of the Christian Church did indeed require; being a Divine Society founded on a Particular Charter from Heaven; whose Ministers Preach and Baptize, and perform other Divine Offices in God's Name; the Sacraments of which are Signs, and Seals, and Pledges of a Covenant with Him, and the Regular Members of which are all entituled to certain Divine Privileges, and Favours, and Graces from him here, with

with a Promise of Eternal Life hereafter. And fuch Offices as these, in the very Nature of 'em Suppose and Require a Divine Authority and Power, and fuch as cannot be derived from the People only, unless it can be proved that God by the Gospel has lodg'd it in their Hands. Not to make therefore any farther Repetition of what has been insisted on above: I only observe, that as the Nature of the Christian Church continues still the same, as the Ministers of it are ftill to continue, as in the Apostles time, to Preach and Baptize, &c. in God's Name; and as the Sacraments to be administred are still Seals and Pledges of God's Covenant: There is still the same Reason that there was then, that their Ministerial Power and Authority should be receiv'd from God, and not from the People only. The People can have no more Power, or Authority in these Matters, than what they are apparently found to be Invested with by the Divine Revelations of the Gospel. Nor can they Derive any fuch Power or Authority upon others: as they themselves never were Posses'd of. And confequently, there can be no Reasonable and Lawful Pretence of taking this Power now out of the Hands of those to whom the Apostles by God's Direction and Appointment committed it: Without either fuch Authority and extraordinary Commission from God and his Holy Spirit, as that by which the Apostles placed it there. Or at least, some such Extreme, Inevitable, Invincible Necessity, as is very rarely or never to be met with, but in Precarious Schemes and Suppositions. Till which the Apostolical Institution of a Gospel Ministry deriving their Function and several Offices from God, by the Hands of the Apostles and their Successors in the Government of the Church: Must needs be owned a Divine Institution of Lasting and Perpetual Force; and reasonably and necessarily to be continued in all

Times and throughout all Ages.

II. I come therefore in the next, and fecond place, to confider the Just and Lasting Force of Apostolical Practice in the Institution and Appointment of Bilbops and an Episcopal Form of Government in the Church. Now, as in the clearing this point I shall proceed much in the same Manner, and by the same Topics as in the former: So I hope to this end our Adversary will not pretend to deny but that Bishops were Originally of the Apostles own Appointment, and first plac'd in the Church, and over their feveral Churches by their Directions and Authority. And therefore with whatever Air of Peremptoriness and Positive Assurance he is pleased to tell us, " That Episcopacy it " felf, as diftinct from and superior to Pres-" bytery,

"bytery, must be reckon'd a New Office. " fince Presbyter and Bishop in the New Te-" frament are always us'd fynonymoufly." I hope he does not so mean a New Office, but that it was originally of Apostolical Appointment. And that he only intends, that there was a Time when Presbyters and Deacons were the only Distinct Orders under the Apostles: and Bishops as such not being yet Constituted, that Word was us'd in Common to Presbyters as Church Governors, without implying any other Superior Degree. That things for fome time stood fo, I grant him, tho' not always. But that notwithstanding this, the Apostles did place Bishops over the several Churches they had gather'd; and over the Presbyters of those Churches: The Concurrent Testimony of all Primitive Fathers and Writers is, as I have shew'd, so plain a Proof, that I think it cannot fairly be deny'd. Concerning the Lasting Obligation then of fuch Institutions, and the Necessary Continuance of them in all Regular and well Constituted Churches, I must observe,

that I think we have great Reason to believe, and very good Evidence to prove, that this Institution also was in persuance of their Apostolical Charter and Commission, and by the Direction of God's Holy Spirit. The Truth of which I think that none can

readily .

readily question, who will seriously con-

fider,

Apostles were under the Guidance and Direction of the Holy Ghost in all the Material and Momentous Parts and Duties of their Apostolical Office. Insomuch that they were not left wholly to themselves, and their own Prudential Conduct, where, and when, and how they were to Propagate and Establish Christianity; but had their Instructions in every thing of any Considerable Importance from the Holy Ghost. Thus Paul and Barnabas had a Particular Mission to the Work of the Ministry thro the Provinces of the Roman Empire.

Als 14. In which they were yet forbidden of the Holy 2, 4. Ghost to Preach the Word in Asia the less; and after they were come to Mysia they affay'd to go

Alls 16.
6,7,9, 10. into Bithynia, but the Spirit Suffer'd them not;
but by a Vision they were call'd into Macedo-

falen by Revelation. And the in General fent to the Gentiles, as their Great Apostle; yet on occasion he was Press'd in Spirit to testify

to the Jews also, that Jesus was the Christ. By the same Guidance of this very Spirit they are supposed by themselves, or their Helpers in the Gospel, to have committed to Writing the Doctrins of Salvation, which before they had Preach'd only. By this also they

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feem to have been directed to the Observance of the First Day of the Week, and setting that apart for the Peculiar Worship and Service of God, in Memory of Christ's Refurrection, instead of the Seventh, which the Tews had observ'd in Memory of the Creation. And when all these Things shall be consider'd, it's, I think, very reasonably and justly to be concluded, that in fo Important and Momentous an Affair as the Appointing their Successors, to whom they committed the Supreme, Ruling, Directing part of their Apostolic Office and Authority, they did not act by meer Human Prudence and Council only, but as Guided and Instructed by the Holy Spirit of God. Especially if we add

2. That till their Appointing and Ordaining Bishops in and over such Particular Churches, they do not seem to have Communicated to any that Principal Part of their Function, which consists in Ordaining Ministers, but to have reserv'd till that time this Power and Authority wholly to themselves. I do not Remember in all the New Testament any one single Instance of any, but the Apostles themselves Ordaining others to the Ministry, till St. Paul gave that Power to Timothy and Titus, who were then Constituted Bishops of those Places with full Power and Authority to the whole Episcopal

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> pal Office; and are Expressly declar'd to have been left at those Places for such purposes. I know very well that the Imposition of Hands on Paul and Barnabas to the

Tit. 1. 5. Work of the Ministry, made by certain Prophets AR. 13. 2. and Teachers that were at Antioch, is by some call'd their Ordination. But I am of another Opinion; and confidering that St. Paul had now been Converted about ten Years, and

that he began to Preach immediately upon Acts 9.20 his Conversion, and that he had spent the greater part of this Time in Preaching the Gospel; I cannot believe that the feparating Him and Barnabas to the Work of the Minifry mention'd now above, was his First Ordination to the Apostolic Office; but rather, as I have faid, a Particular and Extraordinary Mission, by the immediate Direction of the Holy Ghost to the Exercise of that Office, to which they had before been Appointed and Ordain'd in such and such particular Places. And fo I fay no Solemn Appointment and Ordination of any to the Ministry, but by the Apostles themselves, till They began to Constitute and Ordain Bishops, and to Place them in the several Churches as their Successors, to Exercise the Full Pastoral Care as they had done. And then Timothy, Bishop of Ephesus, has a Charge given him to take care of the Teachers in the Church, and feveral other things rela-

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1 Tim.

1. 3.

ting to its Discipline. And among the rest to commit the Doctrin which he had receiv'd 2 Tim. 2.2. from St. Paul to Faithful Men, who shall be able to Teach others also. And Titus then is left at Crete, to fet in Order the things that are wanting, and to Ordain Elders in every City, as St. Paul, who plac'd him there had Appointed him. And this, compar'd with and added to what was faid above, as to the Apostles being under the Immediate Guidance and Direction of God's Holy Spirit in all the Important Affairs of Propagating, and Effablishing Christianity, must be enough to Convince all Candid and Impartial Persons, who in things of this Nature must not look for Demonstration, that so Momentous an Act of their Apostolic Office, in which the Supreme Part of their Authority and Power were convey'd, and that too very much conducing to the Perpetual Establishment of the Christian Church, could be no Act of meer Prudential Advice, Alterable, and Mutable at Pleasure, but such an Authoritative Institution in persuance of the Commisfion receiv'd from Heaven, as has in it the Lasting, Binding Force of a Divine Law. Let me Confirm all this by adding,

3. Lastly. How agreeable these Reasonings and Notions are to the Sense of the Apostolic Fathers and Primitive Church. Glemens Romanus does not only tell us, that they Ap- 1 Ep. \$.42.

pointed

pointed Bishops out of the First-fruits of their Conversion; but moreover that they did it, having first try'd and approv'd them by the Spirit. Plainly teaching us in those Words, that they made use of, and Exercis'd the Extraordinary and Miraculous Gift of Discerning Colles To of Spirits, and Judging of the Hearts and

revenuali. Consciences and Capacities of Men, in the Appointing and Conflituting Bishops and Pastors over God's Church. A certain Proof, that they neither deriv'd their Power from the People, nor were appointed by the Apostles only in the Ordinary way of Human Council and Mutable Advice, but in the due Execution of their Apostolic Function, and by the Power, Direction and Authority of God and of his Holy Spirit. Ignatius does not only perswade Obedience to 'em, which may, I own, be Reasonable and Due to Human and Temporary Ordinances; but he enjoyns Subjection to them, as Presiding in the place of God, to Reverence them as the Father, to follow their Bishop as Jesus Christ follow'd the Father. And to the Church of Smyrna and Polycarp, he fays, Hearken unto your Bishop, that God may hearken unto you: And of the Bishop of the Philadelphians he speaks thus, Which Bishop I know did not obtain the Ministry, which he has for the Public Good, either of himself, or by Men, or thro' Vain-glory, but in the Love of God the Father and

and our Lord Jefus Christ. Expressions which could not be Proper for any meer Human Institutions, but plainly speak out a sense of a Divine Office and Authority Appointed and Ordain'd by the Will and Ordinance of God. Cyprian also, to mention no more, speaks of the Apostleship and Episcopacy as one and the same Office or Order, and declares them to have been accordingly of Divine Institution. But, says he, the Deacons ought to Remember, that the Lord himself chose Cypr. Ex the Apostles, that is, the Bishops and Presidents, when Deacons were appointed of the Apostles after our Lord's Ascension into Heaven, to be Asfistants to them and to the Church. If therefore We shall dare to attempt any thing against God, who makes Bisbops, Deacons also may then against us, who Constitute them. All this together feems to me a sufficient Proof, that the Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy was not a meer Arbitrarious, Prudential, Mutable Act or Ordinance, adapted to that Age and to those Circumstances only: but, such a Solemn Act of their Apostolic Office, to which they were so impower'd by their Divine Commission and Charter, and so directed by the Holy Spirit of God, that it ought to be look'd on as the Ordinance and Institution of God, and must carry in it the Force and Obligation of a Divine Command or Law. And then

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2. As to the Perpetual Obligation of it, and the Necessity of its Lasting Continuance. This, I think, will be Undeniable, when it shall be consider'd.

1. That the very Reason of the Institution feems plainly to have been rather as a Provision for the after Ages of the Church, than for the Apostles own Times. There was the less occasion for fuch a Superior Power, while the Apostles were yet alive, and therefore they deferr'd this Institution till their Departure was very near at hand. But it was easy to Imagine, that when the Extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost were to cease, and the Pastors of the Church to be left to the Ordinary Measures of Divine Grace Guiding the Infirmities of Human Nature: Presbyters alone, without any Superintendent Authority and Inspection, were much more in Danger of Neglect, and Corruption and Unfaithfulness in their Duty, than when there was a Superior Power to Direct, and Rule and Govern them. It may be faid perhaps, that this End of their Inftitution might have been as well answer'd without a Governor of Divine and Independent Authority, and by the Civil Magistrate alone. But as the Church cannot always be fecure of Pious and Religious Princes to Protect it: it was rather to be so Constituted. as that it might, if Persecutions arose, subfift fift without 'em. To which End any Man of Common Honesty and Understanding will eafily perceive, that it was most agreeable to the Infinite Wisdom of the Spirit of God, to make Provision for these its Contingent Exigencies, by the Divine Institution of fuch a Superior Order, whose Peculiar Office and Province it should be, as well to Rule and Govern, as to Ordain Ministers. And as the Episcopal Power tells us plain enough, that this was the true End and Reason of that Institution; so that very End and Reafon shew us plainly, that it was intended as a Lasting and Perpetual Provision, not only for the first, but for all the following Ages of Christianity. Not such a Provision as should be Infallible, and could never Mifcarry, or be Misemploy'd; but such a one as the Wisdom of God thought more Wise, and more Safe, and more likely to fucceed, than an Infinite Number of Presbyters alone, Independent on each other, and without any Superintendency or Inspection.

So that I cannot yet see but that there is still the same Reason for the Continuance of this Order, that there was for the first Institution of it; The good Government of the

Clergy. To this add again,

Power and Authority of our Ministerial Function, in such a way, as Christ first appointed.

pointed. There is the same Reason for a Gofpel Ministry now that there was then, because the same Divine Offices continue still to be perform'd. And there is the same Reason for a Divine Power and Authority in those Ministers now, because the Nature of the Offices and Duties continues still the fame. Preaching is fill Calling and Inviting People in the Name of God; and the Sacraments are still Seals and Confirmations of that Covenant with God, which none can make but those only who are Authoriz'd and Deputed by him. And none can Convey and Derive upon another the Power and Authority to these Offices, but those only who have receiv'd a Charter and Commiffion from him so to do. This, as has been thew'd, was first lodg'd by Christ in the Hands of his Apostles, and Exercis'd by them; but never that I have yet met with in the Primitive Church by Presbyters alone. This, as exercis'd by them, was afterwards convey'd to the Bishops, and to Bishops only; and the Primitive Fathers Glory'd in the Christian Churches Ministers, as having receiv'd the Power and Authority to their Functions from Bishops, and from such Bishops as had deriv'd it by a Continu'd Succeffion from the Apostles themselves. As none elfe duly and regularly deriv'd this Authority in Ordaining Ministers from God and

and Christ but they: so none but they can duly and regularly Convey it unto others. The Consequence of all which is, what I would humbly beg leave to recommend to all the Zealous Favourers of a Presbyterial Government among us. I mean, that if thefe Premises be true, which I think cannot eafily be disprov'd, Episcopacy must be as much a Divine Unchangeable Institution as Presbytery. And if there be a Lafting Obligation in, and a Just Reason for the Continuance of the one, I do not fee, but that there must be the same for the other also. In that I think they are alike the Institutions and Ordinances of God, proceeding both from the same Direction of his Holy Spirit, and both Appointed and Constituted in perfuance of, and by the Authority of the same Divine Commission and Charter. If the Gospel Ministry it felf be the Ordinance and Inftitution of God, Episcopacy also seems to be so too; and that for the very Reason mention'd already. That the one is Appointed, and Ordain'd by the same Persons, from the same Authority, for the same Purpoles, and to the same End; the due and regular Administration of Divine Offices in the Church of God according to his Will. Which cannot be duly and regularly performed, but by Authority deriv'd from him, and in fuch a Way and Method as He him-M 2.

felf has Order'd and Ordain'd. According to which, the Supreme Pastoral Power and Jurisdiction, that by Christ was plac'd in the Apostles, was by them transferr'd to Bishops only, all other Ecclesiastic Offices being exercis'd under them and their Direction. So that I cannot find, what Ground or Pretence can here be made for Changes or Alterations, but by the very same Power and Authority upon which the Apostles at the first made these Institutions: Or at least, fome fuch Important Reasons as will be equivalent to a Politive Ordinance and Law, and as necessarily suppose God's Approbation and Confent. And from these Considerations I hope I may be able

II. Secondly, To answer the most Plaufible Allegations and Objections of this late Book against the Obligation and Necessity of Episcopacy, in these later Ages of the Church. The Chief of which are, I think, these that follow.

1. The Changeable Purpose, Reason, Object. 1. and Intention of all fuch Institutions. They are only of the Nature and in the way of Discipline; not absolutely and essentially Neceffary in themselves as Parts of our Religi-Page 123, on, but only as Means in order to a Farther and Nobler End. And confequently as fuch must

must be Mutable, and subject to such Changes, and Alterations as are most Conducing to that End. In that all Means must be such as are most and best adapted to the Ends which they are design'd to promote. And therefore the same Garment may as well serve Children and Men, as the same Regimen serve People of all Times and Places. Because when any Circumstances happen which cause Means to lose the Fitness which they had before, God by causing those Alterations does as much take off their Obligation, as if he had Expressy declar'd it. In answer to all which I must observe,

1. That it is undeniably to be Granted. that all the Laws, Commands, and Institutions of God are not equally founded upon the same Immutable, Eternal, and Essential Principles of Moral Good and Evil: but. fome of them rather upon the Principles of Natural Order, Expediency, and fuch Decency, as arife chiefly from some Particular Relations and Circumstances of Things. As for Example, The Prohibition of Idolatry was founded on that Eternal, Absolute, and Unchangeable Obligation which we as Creatures in all Ages, Places and Circumstances are under to the Worship of God our Creator, and can in no Case whatsoever be difpens'd with. Whereas the Appointed Rest of the Sabbath Day among the Jews, altho' it was God's own Ordinance as well as M 3 the Particular Occasion, and with a Regard to some such Particular Ends, as were not so Absolutely and Universally binding, but that they might on some Extraordinary Emergencies, and Cases of Necessity be dispensed

with. From whence it follows,

2. That whenever the Divine Laws and Inflitutions of God shall appear to come in Competition one with another, the Laws of meer Politive Obligation must give way to those of Natural and Essential Morality. And the Ordinances and Institutions of Means only, must always in fuch a Case, yield to those which may more properly be call'd the End and Final Aim of our Actions. Thus for Example; If a Jew be put under the Inevitable Necessity either of Worshipping a Falle God, or of breaking the Sabbath, the Law of Means must truckle to that of Ends, and of the two, the leffer Evil to be chosen; and the Sabbath to be violated rather than the Idol to be ador'd. So also in the Case before us; Tho' the Gospel Miniftry in General, and Episcopacy in Particular are of Divine Institution, and to be look'd on as the Laws of God, as well as Faith in Christ and Repentance towards God, yet not of the same Importance and Indispensable Obligation. The former, altho' the Inflitutions of God, are yet only as Means in order order to the more Due and Regular Performance of the Divine Offices of Christian Worship; and helps to the easier Attainment of all those Christian Graces, which may very justly and truly be call'd and confider'd as the End of them. And therefore, whosoever shall pretend to say or maintain, that these Things are of equal Force and Importance in Christianity with the Purest Page 127. Faith, the Soundest Doctrin, and the most Ex- Page 314. emplary Life, and altogether as Essential, in the Nature of Things, to the Immortalizing or to the Salvation of our Souls: He neither knows what he fays, nor of what he affirms. And fuch a Man may as well pretend, that Sacrifice under the Law is as Effential as Obedience, and Circumcision in a Jew as Valuable as Universal Righteousness. Both may be Laws and Ordinances of God, and yet not both of the same Importance in Religion, nor both alike Valuable and Precious in his Sight. Some are founded on the Effential, Eternal, and Unchangeable Principles of Moral Good and Evil, and as fuch, must be of Unchangeable and Everlasting Obligation. And fome only on fuch Particular Considerations and Circumstances, and with respect to such Particular Ends and Reasons to be Promoted by 'em, as are always of less moment than the Ends they Minister to, and on that account must in fome' MA

fome Particular Cases give way to the Extremity and Necessity of Affairs. And such, I confess, the Laws of God and the Constitutions of his Apostles with respect to Church Government to be, when compar'd to the more Essential parts of Religion, Faith, Repentance and Holiness. But then I must

add again,

3. Lastly. That however only as Means adapted to an End they may in some Extreme Necessities be dispens'd with, yet still they are the Laws and Institutions of God, that in all Ordinary, Common and Regular Cases carry a Sacred and Lasting Obligation along with them. And must not always be Sarific'd and given up to the vain Fancies and Capricious Humours of Men; not to fay also to the Hypocritical Pretences, and Profane and Impious Intrigues of Wicked and Defigning Men; however they may sometimes yield to Inevitable and Invincible Neceffity. We are not therefore in these things left at Liberty to break in upon Apostolical Institutions, and the Primitive Establishments of Christianity at our Pleasure; and to make whatever Alterations in the Form of Church Government we of our Fantastic Notions and Mistaken Principles shall think fit, but to Conform our selves to the Institutions and Ordinances of God and Christ by their Apostles, as Strictly and Regularly as the

the Time and Age and Circumstances we live in will admit. Trusting the Wisdom of God in his Provision for his Church. which as he foreknew and Decreed that it should Continue to these Later Ages of the World: so he no doubt Establish'd it on fuch a Foot, and by his Holy Spirit Guided his Apostles to such Constitutions and Ordinances as might, generally speaking, be most Serviceable and best Adapted to that End. and fuit these Times we live in as well as those that have pass'd before us. Nor is it of great moment here to complain of the Mischiefs and Disorders that have happen'd in the World thro the Disputes and Different Sentiments of Men about the Different Forms of Church Government and Difcipline. This is no more than what the Infinite Wisdom of God foresaw would happen. Even the Apostles themselves knew by our Lord Fesus Christ that Contentions would arise about Rom. the Gospel Ministry in General, and the Name of Episcopacy in Particular. And yet this was not thought a just Reason for the Abolition of the Ministry and Episcopacy. Instead of that, the Provision which God thought fit to make by the Apostles against these Contentions, was by the Institution of Bishops, as their fucceffors, and by fetling the Minifery in the Way and Order of Succession. And if the Wisdom of God thought fit here allo

also to leave room for the Trial of the Temper, and Wisdom, and Virtue, and Sincerity of Men, and in confequence thereof Contentions about these things cannot be wholly prevented, but will in our Days alfo fomerimes arise: This neither will nor can vindicate us in breaking through any Divine Ordinance or Institution which we have received from the Apostles of our Saviour. In things indeed where he has left us to our own Liberty, and free from the Obligation of any Divine Ordinances: There we may Lawfully and Innocently use that Liberty in Adapting our own Conftitutions to the Time, and Place, and Circumstances we live in. But where God has before bound us up by Divine Apostolical Establishments, the it be but in Forms of Governments, yet the Wisdom of his Ordinances, and Appointments, are so little to be Disputed, so necessarily to be Submitted to, that they are not without the most Important and Momentous Reasons to be superseded. And indeed, as the very attempt of fecuring the Peace of Christ's Church more effectually by Altering these and making better Constitutions, is at the first stroak setting up to be Wifer than our Saviour who by his Apostles gave 'em; and thus Provided for its Perpetual Continuance: So the Event will certainly be answerable to the Delign. And

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And the Contentions which they should appeafe, in all likelihood be much increas'd thereby. In that the more any People can believe themselves at Liberty from the Obligation of Divine Appointments: The more zealoufly will they contend for having every thing their own way. And which is I think very Particularly to be Regarded, whenever any National Church is Objected against, and Exclam'd ar for Corruptions and Innovations, the common pretence of Quarrels in these Cases: Nothing can be more Properly, or Better urged in its defence, than to flew that it is in all the Confiderable Parts of its Government and Difcipline very Conformable and Agreeable to the Apostolical Age, and the Constitution of the Purest and most Primitive Times. And the nearer it comes to 'em in this refpect, in the Judgment of all Wife and Impartial Christians, the more it will be Justiing i reclier Cares where everen a moused

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Another Objection is, that if these object. 2.

Principles be true as we set sem forth, and any Set of Ecclesiastics (suppose of Bishops) are Page 127.

Neaessary to the Being of a Church: Then, all 314. that are without them, must be Unchurched; and no Religious Society which has not Episcopal Government, that in all things else they enjoy Christianity in the greatest Purity, can be a Christian Church.—Bishops only having a Power

Power to Authorize Men to Preach, Administer the Sacraments, or Perform any other Ecclesi-

aftical Office. I answer

r. That no such Church can be pleaded to be Duly and Regularly Constituted according to the Original, Apostolical Institution of it. In that the Divine Charter of the Gospel, and Supreme Power of its Ministry are not lodg'd in those Hands where the Apostles by God's Authority and the direction of his Spirit had placed them. But then

2. It has been granted already, that these are Laws only of Discipline, and Government, and as fuch of Means ferving to some Nobler Ends. And therefore where God finds any National Societies of Christians, firictly Consciencious as to Faith and Holiness, Sound Doctrins, and Purity of Life, but either thro' Mistake, or Missortune Irregular in these or some other Positive Institutions: We must say here as we would do in all other Cases where we find a mixture of Good and Evil, and confiderable Irregularities in any very Necessary Duties. Things in fuch Cases should in Reason and Duty have been otherwise than they are; but as they are, how far they will answer the ends they were defigned for, and become Acceptable to God thereby; is not for us to Determine, but must be left to his final Judgment. Who art thou that Judgest another Man's Servant &

Servant? In the Sin-offering under the Law, Aaron was by God's Appointment to Attire himself thus. He shall put on the Holy Lin- Lev. 16.6. nen Coat, and he shall have the Linnen Breeches upon his Flesh, and shall be girded with the Linnen Girdle, and with the Linnen Mitre (ball he be Attired: Thefe are Holy Garments; and therefore shall be wash his Flesh in Water and so put them on. Now, if upon a Supposition that Aaron had made this Sacrifice in all other things Perfectly according to the Will and Command of God, excepting only in his Omission of these Holy Garments, a Question should arise whether this was a true Levitical Sacrifice: I doubt not but every wife Man in answer to such a Question would fay. That, as to Aaron himself, he was certainly Guilty or Innocent, according as the Reason of that Omission was Justifiable or not. That therefore however fuch a Sacrifice might be acceptable to God in the People's behalf who had a Concern in it, and no way contributed to the High Priest's Omission: Yet he himself must be accountable to God for the Transgression of a Law which he stood oblig'd, as far as he could, to observe. That if the People too had a share in contributing to that Neglect: They also must have a share in the Guilt of it. And that however when any other fuch like Sacrifice was to be offer'd: The greatest Wisdom

dom would be to Prevent the Occasion of the Dispute, by doing all things according to God's Direction and Commandment. So also in the case before us. If any National Church or Churches, either through Miftaken Principles, or Unfortunate Circum-Stances are found Irregular in their Church Government and Discipline: Means are not always equivalent to their Ends; and that Great God the Searcher of Hearts, who best knows how Momentous the Reafons, and how Necessary and Inevitable the Occasions of fuch Deviations are: Best knows what Allowances are to be made for them, and how far they are to be fustified, and how far to be Condemned. Which certainly will always depend on the Importance of the Occasion and Necessity. But then

3. Whatever may be Presumed in favour of such Churches, as to God's Approbation or Consent, in what they do of this Nature under any Unfortunate Circumstances: Is not fit to be drawn into a Precedent for other Churches. The Best Examples are chiefly to be follow'd, and the most Persect Precedents to be drawn into a Rule, and not those which are through Necessity fall'n under any considerable Desects. If we have no Authority then to Condemn such Churches: We have certainly less reason to Imitate them in their Irregularities, or tode-sire

fire to be like them in their Imperfections. The same thing may in one Person be Criminal and in another Innocent, according to the different Reasons and Principles of acting. A Rash Man for gathering Sticks Numb. 15. on the Sabbath-Day in Contempt of the Com- 33. mandment, was Punished with Death; And yet the Priests in the Temple on the Sab- Matt. 124 bath-Days prophane the Sabbath and are blame-5. lefs. So also may all those Foreign Churches, whofe Unhappy Circumstances would not. upon the Reformation, admit of their being Establish'd in the True, Complete, and Regular Model of Original Primitive Inftitution, be yet very well Approved and Accepted before God: When others, who are under no fuch Exigencies, could not give up the Divine Institutions of the Christian Church to the mere Fickle Humours and Fancies of the Giddy People, without being most highly Culpable and Criminal in his fight. But

3. 'Tis objected again, that this Notion object. 3. of the Divine Institution of Episcopacy is not consistent with several things in our own Constitution. The Universities are United to no Bishop, Subject only to the Deputies of a Lay-Chancellor,—who may Excommunicate even Bishops within their own Jurisdiction. Nay, each of the Universities can in spight of the Bishops of both Provinces, Authorize a Man

to Preach all over England. And Several Colleges oblige Masters of Arts, whether in Orders or not, to take a Text, and formally to Preach on it in their Chappels. To all this I answer. that as there is scarce any Constitution whatfoever, but what in Seventeen Hundred Years must have suffered some Invafions and Encroachments, as all exempt Jurisdictions are known to be, and Papal Corruptions too: So, fuch Inflances cannot reasonably be pleaded either against the Real, or the Lasting Obligation of Episcopacy, or its Divine Institution. No more than a Man can be faid to have no good Title to his Estate, because he has had some of the fmall, extreme Parcels of it, long ago by Invalion or Oppression, taken from him.

And yet in the Instances here mention'd, there is not all the Fairness and Candor that might have been expected from another Man. I know no such thing as a Bishop Excommunicated by either of our Universities. And I am verily perswaded that without an Equivocation he can bring no Proof of it. Neither have the Universities any Power at all to Ordain a Preacher, but only to License those who have been already Ordained and Authorized to their Function by a Bishop. And that enlarging upon a Text in the Chappels of the several Colleges, which Masters of Arts are obliged to Per-

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form whether in Orders or not; and which this Gentleman calls Preaching: He knows, I prefume, that in the University it goes by another Name. And is only a private Exercise among their own Society; which no more deserves to be called Preaching: Than any Exhortation, or Exposition of Scripture which any Private Man may make, in any

Private Family.

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4. Another Plausible Pretence against the Objett. 4. Divine Right both of the Ministry in General, and of Episcopacy in particular, is, the Difficulty of making Good the Line of Succession. r And especially, of deriving this Authority and Power from Popish Hands, and Popish Bishops: Who by reafon of their gross Corruptions of Christianity which they Favour'd and Supported could have no fuch Authority. His Words are thele. I here demand, if the Church of Page 316. Christ be but one, and those who Refuse Communion with it, cut themselves off from it: Whether the Romish Bishops at the Time of the Reformation were Bishops of this Church or not? If they were, then the Protestants by separating from them, and setting up a Communion in Opposition to 'em, became Schismatics, &c. On the other hand, fays he, if the Romish Church at any time before the Reformati- Page 317. on ceased to be a true Church, they ceased to have a Right to the Privileges belonging to it, viz.

of Receiving and Conveying Spiritual Power or Government - and consequently were Uncapable of bestowing any on the Protestant Bishops. If the Papists were Schismaticks, they could be no Medium for Apostolical Succession, for the Page 318. Reason already alledged .- So that there never was so Unlucky an Hypothesis; for whether you allow the Papists to be, or not to be a true Church, it must hinder the Protestants from being so. If they were no true Church they could not Convey to others that Spiritual Power which is necessary. If they were, the Protestant Bishops could not be such a Church, as being guilty of an Unnecessary Separation. And thus he thinks he has gotten us into an inevitable Dilemma, by the virtue of which, go on which fide we will, we can prove no Divine Right to our Function by Succession from the Apostles. And therefore must be glad to hold it all from the Prince, or from the People.

But did this Author never hear of such a thing in Logic as four Terms in a Syllogism? This very Fallacy has he now put upon us. He begins his Reasoning on one Side with the Question about Popish Bishops of the English Church being true Bishops: And on the next side he turns it to the Popish Churches being, or not being a true Church. And by this Fallacy he endeavours to Ensnare his Reader. If he would defend himself by

faying,

faying, that the Bishops cannot be true Bishops whose Church is not a true Church: I must beg leave to tell him, that this is more than he can surely prove. He must first not only tell us what it is that makes a Church to be a true Church, and a Bishop to be a true Bishop; and what it is that destroys a Bishop from being a true Bishop, and a Church from being a true Church: But he must also so make good the mutual Relation between em, that the taking away the one must Necessarily take away the other. And in these things he will meet with Dissipulation between the cough.

In answer therefore to his Reasonings on this Subject I reply, that the Bishops of this Church before the Reformation were true Bishops: However the Corruptions that had Prevailed and were Maintained among them; made it Necessary to separate from their Com-A True Bishop is one thing, a munion. Good and Faithful Bishop is another. The former respects only their having Duly and Regularly obtain'd the Right and Authority of their Office: The other the Due and Regular Exercise and Discharge of it. The former of these the Popish Bishops had, and in that, a just Right of Conveying that Authority to others: Unless it can be proved that they were not Episcopally Ordained; but the latter they were Extremely wanting

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in, and for this Reason their Communion became Unlawful. By the ferious Confideration of which Difference, all the Promising Strength of a Boasted Dilemma, raised in a most formidable manner against an Hypothesis, that was represented as Unlucky to us and Ridiculous: Vanishes immediately and foon comes to nothing. And were there not a fort of People in the World, who are fond of urging any thing that is Plaufible, and Specious in Shew, however void of Solid Weight and Substance: It were very easie for them to inform their Understandings by a plain Parallel drawn from the Priesthood among the Jews. Were not their Priests in our Saviour's Time true Priests, because their Church was then egregiously Corrupted? Yes doubtless; or else our Saviour would never have directed the Man whom he had healed of a Leprosie, to go

Matt. 8. 4-shew himself to the Priest, and offer a Gift of Thanksgiving as Moses had in the Law commanded. And was not the High Priest, be-

High Priest, as to the Legal Authority of one, notwithstanding the Messiah's having been Crucissed among the Jews, in whose Communion he lived? Yes, to be sure, or that Apostle would never have Rebuked himself so sharply for his undecent Revising of him. So also, the Bishops of the Romish

Church

Church however Corrrupt they may be, are yet as to their Regular and Rightful Title to their Function, true Bishops: And as fuch vefted with sufficient Power of Confecrating and Ordaining others, and becoming a fit Medium of that Apostolical Succession which to the Regular obtaining the Episcopal and Ministerial Power is so very necessary. And therefore, as it is one of the Peculiar Privileges and Advantages of the Church of England, that its Bishops came into, and help'd forward the Reformation. and Confecrated and Ordained Protestants to be our Bishops and Pastors: So by this means our Church comes to be more Duly and Regularly Established; and more Agreeably, and Conformably to Apostolical Practice and Institution in this respect, than, perhaps, any other Reformed National Church through the World. By the Advantage of which, we can defend our Regular Title and Right to the Power and Authority of our feveral Functions, and Orders in our Church, in that very Way and Method, which Christ by his Apostles Instituted and Appointed of Conveying that Authority. While some others are perhaps rather to be defended, by Prefuming on God's Favourable Approbation and Gracious Confent to their Proceeding in fuch a way, and method of Discipline, as they have been put upon N 3 either either by Mistake or by Missortune, and Ne-

ceffity, and not by Choice.

Object. 5. Lastly. Another Objection against the Divine Right and Institution of Episcopacy, is taken from the Magistrates Power in the Deprivation of a Bishop. For says our Author, speaking in the Case of the Popish

Page 324 Bishops in Queen Elizabeth's Time, If they had any Spiritual Power derived by way of Succession from the Apostles: No Lay-Powers could deprive'em of what belonged to 'em by a Divine Right. The direct Answer to this Objection, our Author knows is, that Deprivation is not extinguishing the Character, nor taking away the Divine Authority to the Fun-Ation: But only Debarring them the Exercife of it in fuch or fuch Places or Diffricts. But this Distinction I perceive will not readily go down with our Adversary, in that he thinks there is a Necessary, Essential and Inseparable Relation between the Function and the District, the Bishop and the Bishoprick. And this he is fo Confident of, that he fays expresly, That nothing can be more

Page 332. fenfeless than the contrary Opinion; That a
Bishop without a Bishoprick is as absurd as to say
there may be Kings without any Kingdoms, or
any Right to any, and yet each a King of the
whole World, with a Power to make as many
Kings as he pleases. But before our Adversary had Argu'd at this rate, he should first

have

have made good the Parallel, by shewing, that every King has not only a General, but a Personal Divine Right to his Kingdom, first Established by a Divine Institution on his Ancestors, and so continu'd by Succession in the virtue of that Divine Institution to This is what we plead as to the Clergy, and where the Parallel is not just, the Comparison can be of no force. Here therefore lies the Weakness of all this his present Argument. That the Relation between Bishop and Diocess, which he vainly thinks to be thus Essential and Inseparable, is nothing fo. And the Affertions, that the Function is of Divine Institution, but the Diocess of Human, which he thinks to be so fenseless and absurd, have nothing either Senseless or Absurd in 'em, but are very True and very Intelligible. For,

missions and Charters out with what Limitations and Restrictions he thinks sit? He who by his Prophets Anointed David and Jehu to be Kings over Israel, could he not whenever he so thought sit, command a King to be Anointed and Constituted by his Authority King over all those People whatsoever, whom he could by Reason and Perswasion bring into Subjection to him? Is there any thing Senseless and Absurd in such a Supposition, if God in his Divine N 4

Wisdom shall so think fit? If not, then there is in such a Case a King for some time without a Kingdom, even till he can raife one by Perswasion. And if upon this Supposition we should suppose again, That a Great Emperor would give him leave to erect fuch a Sovereignty within fuch a District of his Empire on certain Conditions provided and agreed upon between them. Here then he has a Divine Right to the Exercise of his Dominion, being Commissioned and Empowred to Rule by God's Appointment. But, forasmuch as God left him to himself to raise his Kingdom, and he succeeded in it by Stipulation with the Emperor: Here his Diffrict is of Human Institution, although his Authority be Divine. And again, If that Emperor who first granted him a Power in his Dominions thinks fit to Deprive him, he takes away only his exercife of Power within those Dominions. But he has still from God a Divine Right to be a King, and Rule over any other People where he can by Perswasion raise another Kingdom. The meaning of all which is. That a Man may by a limited Commission be invested with a Character or Title by a Divine Right, or Charter from God to an Office: Altho' that Divine Charter does not fettle any particular District upon him. And if it does not, the District cannot be of

of Divine Institution, altho' the Office may. All this depends upon the Contents and Limits of the Commission, which is indeed the only true Ground of all Divine Right or Claim. But because our Adversary may be apt after his usual way, to say, I make a fenfeless and absurd Supposition for the Infinite Wife God, and fuch as he can never be supposed to favour by any Fact or

Practice: I proceed to shew him,

2. That what is here mentioned by way of Supposition concerning Kings, was in Fact done by God Almighty in the Case of his Apostles and Bishops and the Priesthood. The Twelve Apostles were Bishops; fo esteemed and so called by the Primitive Cypr. Ep. Church and Fathers. And yet at the first 3. Institution without any particular Districts. They, were invested with a Divine Right and Power to Govern the Church of Christ even before there was any fuch thing as a Christian Church actually Founded and Incorporated. Or at most, when at the first Day of Pentecost after Christ's Ascension, the Believers were affembled together all with one accord in one Place: There was then Acts 2. 1. in consequence of God's own Institution and Appointment, that which this Author deems a senseles Absurdity. Twelve Bishops, not with each a particular Diffrict, but a Bishop without a Bishoprick; or which is the same thing,

thing, Twelve of 'em having in common the same Divine Right to their Function in the Church of Christ, which was then but one particular Congregation. And as the Division of this Church afterwards into more Congregations was only for the more convenient performance of God's Worship, and the appointing particular Diffricts a meer Human Institution and Appointment: So accordingly the Deprivation of a Bishop is only an Interdict to the exercise of his Function in fuch and fuch particular Places or Jurisdictions, without a total abolition of the Character, and so no just Objection to the Divine Right and Institution of Episcopacy.

And thus much I think may be fufficient to vindicate the lasting Obligation and necessary continuance of these Apostolical Institutions; as having in 'em the just Force and Authority of a Divine Law, which nothing but the extreme Necessity and severest Exigency of Assairs can Dispense with or

Vindicate us in Superfeding.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Bishops and Clergy's Power in the Government of the Church.

FTER the Proof of the Christian Church's Charter, the Divine Inflitution of its Ministry, with the lasting Obligation of it, as to the Perpetual Continuance of those several Orders that were at first Appointed: The next Thing to be confider'd is, what Divine Right the Clergy, the Bishops especially, as the Head of 'em, have to the Government of the Church, or to any Share in it. And this is a Subject which the Disputes that have of late Years been about Church Government, have made very Nice and Difficult. The Church of Rome has carry'd this far too high; and the Abuses and Corruptions which they have Introduc'd and Maintain'd thereby, have driven others, in their great Deteftation of those Abuses, into the other Extreme. And most Christians in these Disputes are inclin'd to favour either one fide or other, according as they feem to like the Confequences which they apprehend will attend the Raising or Depressing the Authority of the Clergy. And

And altho' those of the Church of England, fince the Reformation, have with wonderful Wisdom and Judgment, Moderation and Temper taken the Middle way, and afferted only fo much Divine Authority to the Bishops and Clergy of the Christian Church, as the Divine Institution of their Function must necessarily and incontestably prove; and given the Civil Magistrate all other Authority and Power under God, both over their Persons, their Actions and their Communities: yet neither so has all Dispute been fuperseded. But some, because the Clergy had formerly a Share in the Abuses and Corruptions that were justly to be complain'd of, have conceiv'd a Mischievous Jealousy of, and a Fatal Prejudice against all Church Power, as Dangerous to Christianity. While others on the contrary, have a very Just and Reasonable Apprehension, that Depressing the Ministry Depreciates also the Divine Offices of Christianity which they are to Minister in; and thereby lessens Mens due Regard to some of the most Solemn Duties of Christian Worship: And so, not only breaks in upon its Discipline and Order, but wounds it even in its Vital Parts. And on this account have perhaps been more Zealous than Judicious in the Defence of it, and carry'd the Pontificate too high to be confiftent with the Just Power and Authority of

the Civil Magistrate.

It is not my present Design to enter the Lifts in this Nice and Difficult Controversy. nor indeed to Intermeddle any farther in it, than will be Necessary to answer the Loose, Prophane and Antichristian Principles and Pretences of this late Book. Whose Author, to wound Christianity thro' the Sides of its Clergy, the Undermining of which is indeed his directeft End and final Aim, ffrikes in with any Side, or any Party; High-Church, or Low-Church, Papift, or Protestant, Church-Man, or Dissenter; all are alike to him that will ferve his Purpofe, and lend a Hand to the Pulling down the Church, Ruining the Clergy, and the total Extirpation of Christianity. And as in such a Defign the Notions of the Disciplinarians are especially useful and serviceable to him; so he knew how to make his Advantage of 'em, and bids fair to gain almost their whole Party to his Side thereby. Even altho' that very Religion which they most zealously contend for, is apparently ftruck at, and would fuffer very much by his Improvement of, and Consequences from their Principles, if he could gain his Point by 'em. It is under the Countenance and Favour, and Prefum'd Approbation of this Party, that he has represented any Claim of the Divine Rights

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in the Clergy as a most Unjust Encroachment; and especially a Divine Right to any Share in the Government of the Church as one of the most Intolerable Grievances of a

Page 159, Pragmatical Priesthood, the great Mystery of

Iniquity, and even Antichrist it self.

Now to a Modest and Just Vindication of our Holy Order from these bitter Revilings and Infamous Reproaches, the Reader I hope will give me leave to Consider,

1. The Just Force of what the Bishops and Clergy have to plead in their Defence.

And then,

2. His chief Objections against it.

I. As to the first we' must consider well,

1. What I have shew'd already, viz. that the whole Christian Church has from God a Divine Commission and Authority, and in that a Divine Right to the Public Affembling together for the Worship of God according to the Revelation of his Will, and the Ordinances Prescrib'd and Commanded in the New Testament. I mean, not only the same Common Right of Natural Conscience with every other Man, but a New, a Second, Additional Right and Obligation arifing from the Divine Inftitution of Chriflianity. That very Commission from God and Christ by which we are Call'd, and Invited to become Proselytes of the Blessed Jefus, fus, giving us also Authority to Assemble together for the Worship of God in his Name, and according to his Directions. And without this Authority it could not properly be said, that the Church is built on the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner Stone. Those Expressions having a necessary Respect, as well to the Power and Authority upon which they became a Church, as to the Instruments by which they were Converted.

2. The Ministers of this Church have, as has been also shew'd, a Divine Right to the Exercise of their Ministerial Function. Who having receiv'd their Authority therein, not from the People Nominating them, but from the Apostles, who by their Apostolical Commission Authoriz'd and Appointed them; become in that very thing the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God. 1 Cor. 4.13 And have by their Function a Divine Authority to Preach, to Administer the Sacra-

not fo Ordain'd and Appointed.

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nes, 3. The Bishops of the Christian Church, as They, and They only had deriv'd upon them, and receiv'd from Christ and his Apostles that Power and Authority of Appointing and Ordaining Ministers, which was at first lodg'd in Christ himself, and afterwards by Him Communicated to the Apostles,

ments, and that too, Exclusive of all others

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and by them to the Bishops; so they thereby have a Divine Right to the Ordination of Ministers, who, where Things are Regularly manag'd, ought always to be Authoriz'd and Appointed by them. And neither can the Civil Magistrate by his Civil Power alone, nor Presbyters without their Bishops take upon them to Ordain Ministers, but it is a direct Violation of the Apostolical Inftitutions of Christianity; and Assuming a Power in God's Name, which by his Divine Law and Institutions never was committed to 'em. Presbyters alone in all the most Primitive Church Antiquity, do not appear to have had any fuch Privilege or Authority given to 'em. Nor any fuch to have been Exercis'd but by the Apostles themselves, from the time of Christ's Ascension into Heaven, till the Placing and Establishment of Bishops over their several Particular Churches. When the Apostles making now a Provision for the Lasting and Perpetual Continuance of the Church after their Decease, convey'd to the Bishops and their Successors that Right and Power of Ordination, which till then they had Referv'd Peculiarly in their own Hands. So that for Presbyters alone to take upon them the Privilege of Ordaining Ministers, is to my Sentiments as direct a Violation of the Christian Institutions, as for the Lay-men to Preach and and Administer the Sacraments. In that the Apostles as Peculiarly committed the Power and Authority of the one kind to Bishops, as of the other to Presbyters and Deacons. And in the very Institution of the Gospel Ministry I cannot but believe that a Lay-Man's Invading the Priesthood and thrusting himself into the Performance of Divine Offices, is as much contrary to the Will and Commands of God in the Gospel, as it was for a Lay-man to offer Sacrifice under the Law.

I may add too, that the Apostles and Bishops as the Supreme of the Ministerial Order,
had also the Supreme Jurisdiction and Authority in all Church Censures, and more
especially in Excommunication. But this is
a Point that our Adversary has so Labour'd
to Ridicule and Expose as Preposterous and
Absurd, that it will require a distinct Chapter by it self to Vindicate it from his Numerous, tho' Unreasonable Cavils and Exceptions.

Let us only observe from the Instances already mention'd, that so far as the Government of the Church is concern'd in, and depends upon a Due and Regular Administration of Christian Worship and Sacraments, according to the Rules and Institutions of the Gospel, the Clergy, who have a Divine Right to their Sacred Office and Function, will

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will necessarily have a Divine Right to some Share in the Government of it. Such a one that no Sacraments can be duly Administred without 'em; nor any Ministers and Pastors be duly and regularly Ordain'd but by them. And in Consequence of this I may

add,

4. That a Power from God to the Exercife of their Office, alway implies and neceffarily carries with it, an Obligation to be Faithful in it. And that very Obligation implies and includes a Trust from God with Authority and Jurisdiction, in order to the Due and Regular Administration of it. Ex. gr. If I am fent of God to Preach the Gospel, and to Invite Proselytes into his Church in order to Salvation; and if I am also Commission'd by him to Incorporate all fuch Converts into his Church by Baptizing em in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: in those very Powers I am also by my Obligation to Faithfulness in the Exercise of 'em, bound to take care that no Doctrins be Preach'd by me but what are agreeable to the Revelation of that Gospel, for the sake of which, and for the Propagation of which I am Commission'd. So that if any Civil Power or State should be suppos'd to command any Doctrin to be Preach'd, as necessary to Salvation, which the Preacher was fatisfy'd in his Confcience Was was apparently contrary to the Scripture: He is thereby oblig'd to Reject fuch Do-Strin. And if his Judgment of the Case be Right, he has then the Authority of God, who has Entrusted him with his Office for the fo Rejecting it. So also for the Sacrament of Baptism; with my Commission to Baptize I am also necessarily Entrusted with fo much Care and Power as to fee that none be admitted to this Sacrament, nor into the Church by it, but such as the Gospel which call'd them intended fhould be admitted. In consequence of all this, the Clergy must be allow'd to have a Divine Right to some Share in the Government and Discipline of the Church; for as much as they also have laid upon them the Care of feeing all Things duly and regularly perform'd. And the intrufting them with fo much Care, must alfo Invest them with so much Power as shall be Necessary to that purpose. So that indeed, the due Exercise of our Holy Function Authorizes both ways; and Empowers the Ministers of the Gospel to take care, i. That nothing be Omitted, or Wanting which the Gospel has made Necessary to Salvation, and requir'd them either to Teach or to Perform. 2. That nothing be added either in Faith or Practice as Necessary and Essential, but what the Word of God has made fo. And nor to allow fo much Power

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as this to the Clergy in the Government of the Church, is to make not the Church Government alone, but even Religion it self and the Laws of the Gospel subject to, and Repealable by the Civil Magistrate. our Author who is mightily Delighted in Imputing all the Corruptions of Religion to the Clergy, will probably tell us, that the Success does not at all answer the End of God's Institution, nor the Care that we own incumbent on us. However if the Natural Tendency of Things be consider'd, and the Events would alway answer the Wisdom of Divine Providence in his Provision for them; I must beg leave to tell him in his turn, that this Institution is a much more likely way of preferving Religion, than his fond Scheme of deriving all Authority from the People. In that the Minister's Obligation will always be according to the Powers and Authorities which they receive. They who receive their Authority from God, cannot but be the more oblig'd in Conscience thereby to Please God, and to take his Gospel by which they are Authoriz'd, as the Rule and Standard of their Trust and Obligation. While those who own no other Authority but either the Prince on one hand, or the People on the other, may much more eafily be induc'd to think that there is nothing more Effentially incumbent on them, than whether true or false; or to the Whimseys and Fancies of the Multitude, tho' never so Unreasonable and Extravagant. And how is Christianty in such a Case like to Prosper, or be preserv'd from Corruptions?

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5. Lastly. Whatever Authority and Power of this kind, the Christian Church and Clergy by their Charter may be entrusted with; yet, as it is a Trust only and not an Absolute Dominion; as it may be Abus'd and Corrupted from the Purpofes for which it was defign'd: fo They also act in this their Power Subordinately to the Direction and Government of the Civil Magistrate. The Clergy's Authority in their Holy Offices, however deriv'd by Christ and his Apostles from God, yet it is not so exculsive of that Paternal Care which all Christian Princes ought to have, even of the Souls as well as of the Bodies of all the People: as that it exempts them from their Inspection, Cognizance, and Jurisdiction, as to the Manner of their Executing those Functions. The Civil Magistrate has not of himfelf any Authority either to Preach the Gofpel, or to Administer the Sacraments, no nor to Ordain or Authorize Preachers and Paftors his Civil Jurisdiction. This being what 03

we have feen by the Divine Institutions of the Gospel committed to a Distinct Order and Set of Men, who derive it by Succeffion from Christ and his Apostles. But then, He has Authority over the Clergy also, as his Subjects, to fee that they be Honest and Regular and Faithful in their Duties. And also to make Provision, that fuch Persons and such Persons only may be admitted by 'em to that Function, as are in all Respects duly and fitly Qualify'd thereto. And also to Animadvert and Inflict Punishments on those who shall be found either Negligent or Irregular. And as this Author could not but know, that what I am now Delivering as to this Matter is exactly agreeable to the Establish'd Doctrin of the Church of England: I cannot but wonder with what Face he could Suggest, that all Pretence to any Divine Right in the Government of the Church is intended and design'd only to make way for an Entire Exemption from the Juris-diction of the Civil Powers. So far from it, that I have clearly prov'd above, it is no farther to be Pleaded for and Defended, than becomes Necessary to the due Exercise and Prefervation of the Christian Religion and Worship. And as this measure of Divine Right and Power, which he fo Growls at in the Church, is no more than what he himself afferts to every Private Conscience:

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Page 60,

fo I cannot see how he can Deny this Divine Right to the Church of keeping close to what they believe, and I think upon very good Reasons, to be the Divine Sanctions and Institutions of Christianity, without making even Christianity also, as far as Public Worship is a Part of it, entirely Subject to and Alterable by the State. And then indeed if this be his Aim, my Wonder ceases. He that has no more Conscience than to intend the one, may easily have Modesty little enough to affert the other.

These then being the true Foundations of the Clergy's Plea for a Divine Right to some Share in the Government of the Church, the Extent of this their Power will be best seen

by Examining,

II. Secondly, The Just Force of our Author's chief Objections against it. The Chief of which are these two.

1. First. That the Clergy having no Le-Object. In gislative Power, cannot be Governors of the Page 61. Church, because there can be no Government without it, to which all Jurisdiction adheres. For whoever has any Coercive Power, must be either a Legislator himself, or else act by virtue of a Power deriv'd from him whose Minister he is. Which Words, tho' brought as an Objection against the Clergy's Claim to a Share

in the Government of the Church for want of a Legislative Authority, do yet, so Wonderful is our Author's Talent at close reasoning, carry a Satisfactory Solution of the Difficulty in the close of 'em. In that there may be, by our Adversary's own Confession, a Coercive Power or Jurisdiction in Government Subordinate to the Legislator himself, and by virtue of a Power deriv'd from him. Which indeed is, truly speaking, the Church's Case. Whose Laws and Constitutions as they are of two sorts, so also is the Legislative Power from whence they receive

their Authority and Obligation.

1. There are the Necessary Doctrins and Effential Duties of Religion which every Body at all Times, and in all Ages and Circumstances are bound to Believe and to do. And as to these in the Greatest Latitude of 'em, God and Christ are their true and only Legislators. And all the Jurisdiction and Power which the Church or Clergy have in this respect, is only under, and Deriv'd from that Supreme Divine Legislation. In which, tho' the Clergy act by virtue of a Power deriv'd from God, yet the Laws by which they are to Rule are also given by him, and in no wife Alterable by them. Such as this is the true Foundation of the Church's Jurisdiction, which requires no farther Legislation, than that of him from whom

whom they derive their Authority. The End and Business of their Government being not the making New Laws for the Society, which are indeed Everlasting and Immutable; but Governing with a Faithful and true Heart, by the Rules already

given.

2. There are besides these, other Constitutions of this Society of a less Important and a more Indisferent Nature; such are the Appointing Times and Places, and Habits, and the several Rites and Ceremonies to be us'd for the Preservation of Decency and Order. And in this the Church has a Legislative Power, the not Absolute and Unlimited. The Church has a Power to decree Rites and Artic. 20. Ceremonies, and Authority in Controversies of Faith. And yet it is not Lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word. But then in this Case the Church is to be consider'd in two Capacities.

the State, and acting under that Authority. And in this Case, the Church has not an Absolute Legislative Power Independent on the State; but the Clergy are rather of Council to the Prince, and chiefly to set forth and represent what seems to them agreeable to the standing Rule of God's Holy Word. And the Determination and Authoritative

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thoritative Sanction of all fuch Church Laws and Conftitutions, is not from the Clergy alone, but from the Supreme Civil Magiffrate under which they act. That Authoritative Jurisdiction to which they have a Divine Right, being chiefly of the former fort, and respecting chiefly the Ministerial Offices, which God himself has Entrusted them with, and by which he has oblig'd 'em to take care, that nothing be done contrary to the Perperual and Effential Laws of Christianity. And as our Adversary knows well enough that this is all the Power in in Church Government, which the Greatest of our English Clergy fince the Reformation have pretended to, and undertaken to Defend: fo nothing but the heighth of Malice and Ill-will to our Profession beyond all Regards to Truth and Reason could have represented such a Power in the Church, as Inconfistent with the Supremacy of the State. Nor do I see how he himself can afcribe much more to the Principal Legislature upon Earth, without giving up at once all the Divine Institutions of Christianity, which I find he is willing enough to part with. But,

2. The Church may be confider'd also in a State of Persecution, or at least as so Neglected and Disregarded by the Civil Power, that they are lest to themselves, and to act

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and make fuch Provisions for the Decent Performance of Divine Worship, and all Things thereunto belonging, as they shall judge meet. And in this Case, tho' the Clergy have not, that I am as yet sensible of, any Divine Right or Power to bind any thing of this Nature on the Consciences of Men: yet, as Persons suppos'd to have an proper Bndowments and Qualifications fitting 'em for a right Judgment in these Matters; as Persons set apart for the more Peculiar Confideration of Spiritual Things, and entrufted with the Administration of Divine Offices: they are very Properly to be confulted on fuch Occasions, and a Dutiful Regard to be had to their Modest Reasonings and Resolutions upon them with respect to Decency and Order only. But all the Authority that I think they can here pretend to a Divine Right to, is only in Confequence of that General Care which they in their very Function are entrufted with, and the Obligation that is thereby laid upon 'em to fee, that nothing be wanting that is Neceffarily requir'd as to Faith and Practice in the Worship of God. Nor any thing added as necessary to Salvation that is contrary to God's Word. In which, tho' every Bishop within his Peculiar Diffrict has the Supreme Jurisdiction and Authority, yet as he is not Lord of God's Inheritance, but only a Shepherd

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herd and a Guide; fo neither He nor his Clergy, nor indeed his Brethren in the Synods, have any Power to bind the Confciences of Men, by requiring any thing as neceffary to Salvation which the Holy Scripture has not made fo. So that as all the Legislation here pretended to is only a General Provision for Decency and Order, in Rites and Ceremonies, and filencing Controversies by some Common Articles of Agreement and Consent in Matters and Doctrins of Religion; fo to this we fee, there is not pretended a Divine and Independent Right, but only a Consequential, or Prudential Authority, if I may so speak, founded only on that General Trust, and exercis'd in part by Necesfity and in part by Confent, when Rejected by the Civil Magistrate. And as in all these Constitutions the Apostles themselves, and the Bishops and Primitive Fathers after them, had always a great Regard to the Sentiments and Good liking of their People; and (generally speaking) acted in Concert with them: we may in that see how far the Share in Church Government, which the Clergy justly claim a Divine Right to, is from being prejudicial either to the Prince. or to his Subjects. It is chiefly a Divine Right to the Ministerial Power in the Sacred Offices of Christian Worship, and such farther Authority as in the Nature of things becomes

becomes Inseparable from it. But all this under the Supreme Legislature of God and Christ, from whom they receive their Authority, and from whom they have received also the fixt Laws and Rules of Government. But,

2. His next great Objection, which in- object. 2. deed makes up the Substance of his whole Seventh Chapter, is taken from the Abuses which the Clergy may be guilty of by having any Independent Power, tho' even thus limited and in these Particulars only. An Page 232. Independent Power in the Clergy is a certain way, not only to have Corruptions got into the Church, but to Perpetuate them. Since in consequence of that, Men are oblig'd to submit to what soever Terms of Communion they think fit to impose; and to pay for ever Ecclesiasti- Page 233. cal Obedience to those Governors, tho they teach ever so false and heretical Doctrins. Which must prevent all Reformation, except a Majority of the Governing Clergy chance to Reform altoge- Page 235. ther. Nay this curs'd Hypothesis makes it to Page 238. depend on the Clergy, whether there shall be a Religious Worship or not, since they may put People under an Interdict. But, if thefe things are too Absurd to be admitted, the Church, that is, the Private Christian People, cannot be depriv'd of their Fundamental Right ing, and Unmaking their Ministers. For as the People are oblig'd to Reject those whom they Page 236. judge

judge false Teachers, sothey are bound to take those they judge Honest and Sincere, and who will Preach the Touth. And how does this differ from a Right to make or deprive their Ecclesiaftical Ministers? To own they can unmake, or deprive 'em by thus separating from em, and to deny they can make or Ordain others, is abfurd, since no more Power is required for the one than the other. So that 'tis necessary to own, that either their Power depends on the People, or elfe that Men are oblig'd to what soever Terms of Communion they are pleas'd to impose. This is the Objection in its full Strength; and it's like our Author's Reasonings upon this Subject: parch'd up of fome feeming and fuppos'd Abfurdities, and then tacking to 'em what Wide Consequences and Remore Conclusions he thinks fit, without any tolerable regard either to Truth or Reason For For the prison and the last

on a supposed Abuse of that Divine Right and Power which they claim. They may use their Power so and so, to such and such ill Purposes and Ends, which are Absurd and Intolerable; and therefore it must be concluded that they never had any Divine Right and just Claim to it. Can this Wife Author with all his Boasted Pretences of seeing farther into Church and Civil Powers than other Men, make this Assertion Good?

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That an Office deriv'd from God can never be abus'd; or vice verfa, That an Abus'd Authority could not Originally be from Him? Was not Judas an Apostle because he perfidiously betray'd his Master? And are no Kings the Ministers and Ordinances of God, because some of 'em have turn'd Tyrants? Yes most certainly. And so also may the Clergy have a Divine Power and Authority from God in their Function in General, altho' fome of 'em may either Ignorantly or Wickedly Preach false Doctrins, and require Impious Terms of Communion. They may have Power from God altho' they transgress the Bounds of it, and go farther than their Commission warranted them. The Abuse of Authority therefore is no certain Proof that it could not be from God. If he pleads,

2. That the Force of this Objection is not taken from the Clergy's Abuse alone, but rather from the Power which he supposes the People to have of making their own Ministers, when the Clergy thus abuse their Commission: I must now tell him, that here layes his Fundamental Mistake and the Weakness of this Objection, and indeed of his main Argument in all this Matter. The People, fays he, are not bound to adhere to False Teachers, and those who impose wicked conditions of Communion. Let that be grantplace.

ed. They are then to take those whom they judge Honest and Sincere, and will preach the Truth. I deny that; They are not to Take fuch alway of themselves, but rather to make Application to their Governors and Superiors for fuch to be fent among them. He will possibly say, for he belongs to those who love to speak evil of Dignities, that all the Bishops and all the Clergy are so Corrupt, that none Honest and Faithful are to be found. What, no Honest and Faithful Preachers to be found to be fet over and Instruct a Faithful People? That is Hard indeed. Well, but let that also be suppos'd, and what then? Why then they may Unmake and Deprive em by separating from them. Depriving is one thing, and separating from 'em is another; and the one may be Lawful. when the other is not. And a Man may be Justify'd in separating from that Minister whom he has no Authority to deprive. But lets suppose his Deprivation too, and what then? Why, He who can Unmake, can also Make, and Ordain others, fince no more Power is required for the one than for the other. I deny this too, in that Deprivation is properly only Debarring a Man the Exercise of his Function within Such and Such Territories, without wholly Diffolving the Capacities and General Right which he has under God to the Exercise of that Function in another place.

place. And thus Deprivation is one thing, and Destroying the Function is another. Let us then put all these things together, and see upon what Wide Principles and what a Multitude of Precarious Notions this Author has rais'd one Ridiculous Objection against the Clergy's Divine Right to their Ministerial Offices, and a Share in the Government of the Church thereupon. The whole Scheme. we fee, is founded on fuch an Universal Corruption of the Clergy, as is no way poffibly to be retriev'd. Till which it cannot be Lawful to separate from 'em. Then a Power to Deprive, as well as to Separate: and then such a want of Better Ministers to be had any where elfe thro' the Christian World, as shall vindicate the Ordination of New ones for this purpose in an Uncommon and Extraordinary way. Now, if there be a Failure in any one of these Particulars. there can be no Force in this Argument, by which he would prove, that the People have such a Power of making their own Ministers. And if even then, that should be allow'd good, which I will not now take upon me to Determine either way: yet still, its only in fuch an Uncommon and Extraordinary Case, of the last and severest Extremities, as can have no Force when other Methods may be had recourse to. And therefore this is Ridiculously pleaded against the 210 Of the Bishops and Clergy's Power, &c. the Divine Authorities of the Christian Clergy in General. In short to pretend that we must either own that all Power depends on the People, or that we are oblig'd to Submit to whatever Terms of Communion the Clergy are pleas'd to Impose: is a Dilemma, the two Sides of which are Wider and much more distant, than Rome and Geneva, and leave space enough for all the Christian Clergy in the Universe to march in a Body between em. And till he can bring his Arguments fomewhat closer together, we may I hope be allow'd to dismiss this Objection, as of no Force against the Clergy's Right to fuch a Share in the Government of the Church, as our English Constitutions do affert, and I have here endeavour'd to defend. भागा है। हिन्दु कर के प्रमुख कार ने ने किया है। जो है जो है

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CHAP. VIII.

Of Excommunication.

ROM the Legislation of the Church our Author proceeds to its Jurisdiction; and because he believes that it can have no Divine Right to any Share in the one, he concludes that it cannot possibly have any just Claim to the other. And as it is very well known that the Principal part of the Church's Jurisdiction is Excommunication: So from hence he takes occasion, after his usual manner, to inveigh most bitterly against that, as one of the most Detestable and Abominable pieces of Iniquity and Priesteraft that ever was in the World. Uncharitable, Unreasonable, Irreligious, an Invasion of the Authority of the Prince, and Injurious to the Liberties and Duties of the People; and in one Word good for nothing at all but to Support the Power, and Tyranny and Corruptions of the Priesthood, after the Example of the Idolatrous Druids, and indeed wholly borrow'd from them and other Heathen Priefts. Has our Author nothing worse than all this to say of Ecclesiastical Excommunication, that it comes from the Devil

Page 120. Devil and not from God, and is far from having any Foundation in Religion and Reason? I need not transcribe any Particular Sentences or Periods to make good this his Charge, in that this is his usual Strain of Civilities and Complements to the Christian Church and Clergy; and runs thro' almost his whole Book, but more especially the three first Chapters of it. But however I must do our Author this Justice, to let the Reader know, that there is a kind of a Lay-Excommunication which he could be contented to let pass without all these bitter Clamours and Invectives against it. Such, Page 95. as he imagines, Excommunication was at first, when he thinks it only confifted in avoiding the Conversation of an ill Man, and perhaps placing him at some distance from the rest of the Congregation. Such a kind of Discipline as this, in which the Clergy could pretend no Peculiar Power, might go down with him; tho' even that is forc'd Meat, with a Man who thinks it the Natural Fundamental Rights of all People to Worship God what way they most Fancy; and to fet up what Communities they please. But if you once mention the Excluding Men from Divine Offices and the Christian Sacrament, and allow the Clergy to have a hand in it: there is then Death in the Pot immediately, and nothing but Iniquity, and Poyson, and Ruin, and Deffru-

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Etion, in our Author's Sentiments, to be ex-

pected.

Now to do Justice to the Church of Christ, and satisfy every Honest, Sincere and Impartial Christian what its Rights and Powers are, as to this Matter which he thus bitterly and grievously complains of; it will be proper,

- I. To state the true Nature and Purpose of Excommunication, what it is, and what it is intended for.
- II. To vindicate the Reasonableness and Wisdom of this way of Proceeding, not only as Common to all Societies, but as more Peculiarly sit and proper for the Christian Church.
- III. To defend the Clergy's Right and Power in this part of our Ecclesiastical Discipline. And then,
- IV. Lastly. Shew of what Moment and Importance it is to all Christians; and how it ought to be Esteem'd, and Regarded by them.
- I. To state the true Nature of Excommunication we must consider that it is, directly and strictly speaking, no more than Discarding

carding or Excluding fuch a Member of a Society from the Communion and Privileges of it. And as such it is indeed no more than what is Common to all other Societies and Communities whatfoever. Only, as the Christian Church is a Society more Eminently Divine, and Sacred than any other whatever, as founded on a more Extraordinary Charter and Commission from Heaven. and endow'd with several Divine Privileges and Favours from God: so accordingly the just and reasonable Exclusion of any Person from fuch a Community may in the Causes and Confequences of it, be very Dangerous and Mischievous to the Persons Excluded. For, as the Divine Ordinances of this Society are Means of Grace, and Seals and Pledges of God's Favour, and as fuch, Occasions both of Advantage and Comfort to every good Christian: so consequently to be Excluded from 'em, must be proportionably Difagreeable and Difadvantageous. But then, this is not by any Direct Power which God has committed to Ministers over the Souls, or Spirits of Men; over the Immorality or Salvation of their Brethren: but only by Consequence, as He has annex'd these Privileges and Favours, these Benefits and Comforts to the Society which are Incorporated in his Name, and of which the Clergy are by Divine Institution the Ministers. The

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The true Nature of Excommunication then is, I fay, no more than an Exclusion from the Society. And whatever Mischiefs or Dangers may be suppos'd to belong to or attend it: proceed rather frum the Causes by which it was occasion'd, and the Confequences that follow it. And this I could not but think very Necessary to take notice of, in that, as he who Refolves to Expose any Man to Contempt can scarce do any thing more Proper for fuch a purpose than to Paint him in a Fool's Coat, fo this Author to make the Clergy and all the Church Powers they claim appear Contemptible and Ridiculous, has all along made the most Unfair, Scornful and Scandalous Reprefentation of their Claims and Privileges. And as to Excommunication in particular he cannot represent the Church's and the Clergy's Notion of it to be any thing less than delivering Men to Satan, to be totally Abandon'd of all Civil Society and Conversation here, with a Power of Damning them eternally bereafter. Pdge 116. Now, as it cannot but be thought Monstrous, that God should thus commit the Souls and Salvation of all Christians wholly into the hands of their Ministers, to be Sav'd or to Perish according as they shall Execute their Authority: fo while Excommunication is fet off as just such a Monstrous and Extravagant Exercise of Power, every

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one will think that both it and the Clergy who pretend to it, are fit to be Exploded and Despis'd. And thus his Reasoning appears Plaufible by the Advantage of a flie and Artificial Misrepresentation. So that to shew the Weakness and Inconclusiveness of this way of arguing, you must first consider the Falseness, and Unfairness of the Representation. Excommunication is no more than Excluding from the Society, and the Sacred Privileges of it. But as for Delivering up unto Satan, it was a Peculiar, Extraordinary Miraculous Power, which God gave to the Apostles chiefly, who were thereby enabled to Vindicate their Power under Christ from the Scorn and Reproach of those who should by any Scandalous Impieties Incense God's Wrath, and yet Contemn the Apostles Authority in his Church, when they were Cenfur'd and Animadverted upon on fuch Accounts. To support, I say, their Authority and Power, they were enabled by God's Spirit to ffrike Ananias and Saphira with fuddain Death; to inflict on others Sickness and Diseases, and to let loose Evil Spirits among them to torment them. But then this was an Extraordinary and Miraculous Power lodg'd with the Apostles, but not continu'd to all Gospel Ministers in After-Ages. And therefore all the Malicious, Invidious and Scornful Reflections which this Author

Author would throw upon the whole Christian Church and Clergy as claiming such a Power, he should, if he would have done fairly and honourably, not have thrown upon the whole Priesthood without Distinction, but on the Church of Rome, and its Abettors, who make Pretensions to that Power still, and with an Exemption to the English Church and all the true Sons and Members of it. But had he done thus he had lost a fair Opportunity of Reviling the Priesthood, a Talent that he takes a singular

Delight in.

So also again, for wholly Discarding and Rejecting an Excommunicated Person from all Civil Conversation, which this Author makes a mighty Noise of, and forms the most Considerable of his Arguments and Objections against: I know no fuch thing in the Laws and Constitutions of the Church of England. And if this Author had intended his Discourse against the Church of Rome and its Priefts only, he should have told us. and kept true to his Defign, and not levell'd his Arguments against Priesthood in General, and Priests of all Communions without Distinction. But when any Man is once come to that pass that all Religions are alike to him, and he can change Communions with every Wind: 'tis no wonder if he then tells the World, that all Priests as well as all

Religious are the Same. The Church of Eng. land tells us indeed, that the Perfon which by the open Denunciation of the Church is Excommunicated ought to be taken off of the whole Mul-Artic. 33-titude of the Faithful as a Heathen and a Publican, until he be openly Reconcil'd by Pennance and receiv'd into the Church again. And I think he is both look'd upon and treated as a Heathen and a Publican, who is Rejected from the Holy Communion of Christians. and a Participation of the Divine Ordinances of Christianity. Altho' I will not diffemble, but that as St. Paul himself warns Christians to withdraw themselves from every Brother that walketh diforderly: So it's the general fense of the Christian Church, that Wicked and Excommunicated Persons are not to be too intimately and familiarly convers'd with. And that both by reason of the Infection which Good Men may receive by the corrupt Communication of the Wicked, and the Scandal which by fuch Communication may be given to the Church. And as our Author himself owns that this was of old the Excommunication among the Tems: fo there are very good Reasons for it, even in Christian Excommunication also, of which I shall speak more particularly by and by. But I would have the Reader take

notice however, that I know nothing in the

Laws, or Practice of the Primitive Church

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in General, or of the English Church in Particular: whereby an Excommunicated Person is so to be Avoided, and Discarded from all Civil Conversation: as that it was either Unlawful, or Penal to Trade or have Commerce with him. And this Observation is very much to our Purpose, in that it will supply us with an easy and short Answer to several of his most Plausible and Specious

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In particular, he tells us that none can exercife any Profession, Calling, Employ, or Trade what soever, who is to be shund by all People. Page 39. And if the Clergy can oblige every Body to Shun those they Excommunicate, they must consequently be able to deprive whom they please of their Professions; and drive the most useful Citizens and their Trades into Foreign Parts. How Page 41. great must their Power be who can Exclude Men from Everlasting Life? The Temporal Effect is Sufficient to enslave Mankind, since the Depriving one of all Converse must needs be Insupportable to a sociable Creature as Man is. With a great deal more to that purpose, which is indeed nothing at all to the purpole now in hand, in that Excommunication does not thus Banish Men from all manner of Human Society and Civil Conversation. It is only Excluding from the Sacred Communion of the Church. Nor are their Perfons, or their Civil Conversation any farther to be Avoided thereupon: than as you would shun the Company of an Heathen, or a Publican, viz. To prevent Corruption of Manners on the one hand, and Scandal and Dishonour to Religion on the other. Nay, fo far is Excommunication in Reality from putting a Man under an Absolute Interdict as to all Conversation with other Christians: that it's the Duty even of the Clergy themselves so far to Converse with them, as to Endeavour by Admonitions, Exhortation, Reasoning and Reproof to bring 'em to fuch Repentance as may make their Communion with the Church neither Scandalous nor Mischievous Nor is it absolutely forbidden for 'em to hear Sermons to fuch an end, and especially when they are admitted to it not fo much as Members of the Church, as to a Means of Repentance in order to perswade them to such Contrition and Humiliation as may Render them capable of being Restor'd to its Communion without Scandal and without Danger. Till which the Excluding of a Diforderly Member is, I think, the Common Right of all Societies whatever. But, fays our Author, in this sense it belongs to the whole Community, and not to the Clergy in any Peculiar manner. I shall speak to that presently, after I have shew'd as I propos'd, and all and terranovi

II. The Reasonableness and Wisdom of this way of proceeding, not only as a Right common to all Societies, but as more Pecuculiarly sit, and Proper for the Church. Excommunication is excluding from the Holy Communion of the Christian Church, and the Participation of the Christian Sacrament, and other Divine Ordinances and Privileges therein; among which the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is of the chiefest Note. Now all this our Adversary calls an Abomination, Absurd and Impious, baving Page 120. no Foundation in Religion or Reason.

1. It is Uncharitable, if they who are out of Page 88. the Pale of the Church, as such are out of the

visible means of Salvation.

2. Tis Unreasonable and Unaccountable to Page 89. hinder a Man from performing one part of his Duty, (especially so great a one as the Public Worship of God,) because he fails in another. And the Greater Sinner one is, there's the less reason to debar him from hearing such Sermons, Page 92. as are made up of Reasons to perswade him to his Duty both to God and Man.

3. If he is to Worship God in Private, why not in Public? Since that is own'd to be a greater Page 90.

Duty, and more likely to prevail.

4. Nothing can be a severer Reflection on the Clergy, than to suppose the best way to make a Notorious Offender turn from his Evil Courses, Courses, is to have nothing to do with their Mi-

niftry.

5. Laftly. As to the Sacrament, 'tis either a Crime, and then the Clerey's Refusing it is no Punishment, because, that is only refusing to contribute to another's Sin. Or elfe a Duty, and so the Glergy can never have a Right to hinder a Man from doing his Duty. Or elfe Indifferent, and then it's no matter what Liberty the Clergy take in Refusing it, since no Body is prejudic'd thereby. So that in nane of these Cases is there any room or pretence of their having any Jurisdiction. These an Indifferent Reader may be apt to think at first fight Plaufible Pretences and Specious Reasonings, and to bear hard against the Church's Power in Excommunication. And yet I do not doubt but that he will be able to fee thro' the Weakness of 'em all, when he shall have confider'd well these few Things that I am going to lay before him.

r. First then let him consider, that Prayer, and Public Worship, and Receiving the Sacraments and the like External, and Instrumental Duties of Religion, altho' they are Necessary Duties and highly Commendable: yet neither is the Commendation of, nor the Obligation to 'em wholly and absolutely founded in the opus operatum, or External Acts; but rather in the Inward Disposition and Temper of our Minds from

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whence they proceed, and in their being perform'd in such a Way and Manner as may be for the Honour of God, the Advantage of our own Souls, and the Edification of other Men. For want of these things, not only the Sacrifices under the Law were often Rejected by Almighty God as having nothing Good and Commendable in 'em, he that Sacrifices a Lamb is as he that cutteth off a Isai. 66.32 Dog's Neck, and he that burneth Incense as he that bleffeth an Idol. But also the Prayers of the Wicked thus offer'd up shall be turn'd into Sin, and their greatest Devotion for want Prov. 152 of a true Penitent and Honest Heart become 8. 28.9. an Abomination. And St. Paul mentions those who in the Public Worship and at the Holy Sacrament came together, not for the 1 Cor. 11. better but for the worfe.

2. Let it be consider'd again, that when God makes Promises of Blessings and Spiritual Advantage to the Performance of such Duties for the Reasons above mention'd: they then become Privileges as well as Duties. And yet the both Privileges and Duties they become Honourable, or Dishonourable before God; Prositable, or Unproside ble to our selves; and Useful, or Scandalous among our Brethren, according to the Qualifications of the Persons performing, or the manner by which they are performed.

2. From hence I observe again, that the fame Action may be a Duty, and a Crime, a Privilege and Disadvantage, at the same time: The Difference arising from the different Dispositions and Circumstances with which it is committed, from those with which it ought to have been. It's a Duty as we are Commanded to Worship God, and to Honour and to Pray unto him. And it's a Pri-vilege also, as it's a Duty, to which when duly and faithfully perform'd God has Graciously Promis'd very great Advantages. But then as it is not the opus operatum, or External Act of Prayer alone that is expected and requir'd, Commended of Men and Rewarded of God, but the doing it in fuch a Manner, and with fuch Concomitant Devotion of Heart and Virtues of Life as God requires: So accordingly when these are wanting and the Contrary to 'em Notorious, fuch Devotion is both Scandalous before Men and an Abomination before God. And therefore,

4. As there may be this Corruption and Iniquity even in performing the most Solemn Duties of Religion, whereby they shall become neither Honourable to God, nor Benificial to Man: that Discipline which is peculiarly fram'd to take off this Scandal, and to prevent this Mischief cannot be disagreeable either to true Religion or sound Reason.

Reason. Nor can it, but by such gross Corruptions of it as I shall never take upon me to defend, become either Impious, or Absurd. And if our Author would but carefully have attended to this Important Difference, between the Obligation of Worshipping God by Prayer in General, with receiving the Holy Sacrament also in a due and fit manner as God and his Laws have prescrib'd: and both the Scandal and Danger that attend even these our Duties, when perform'd unduly with a Spirit of Prophaneness and Ungodly Life: he might eafily have feen thro' the Weakness and Emptiness of his own best Reasonings against Excommunication. For.

5. Is there not a great deal of Unreasonableness and Unfitness in the very Nature of things, in Administring, things Holy, and Ordinances Sacred, to Perfons notoriously Vicious and fcandaloufly Profane? In admitting those People to the Communion of Saints, and the Pledges of God's Love and Favour. and the Peculiar Privileges of the Children of God: who by Blafphemy, Profaneness. Adultery, and Proftituting their Confciences to Worldly Interests, visibly appear to be rather Children of the Wicked one? Is it not a Reproach to the Church of Christ. that while it pretends to be a Society of God's Children, it should yet not only Harbour

bour amongst them, but Exhibit also the Seals and Pledges of Divine Grace and Benediction to those whose Immoralities can give em no just Hope of any such Advantages? Is not this to represent the whole Society, by the Viciousness of its Members that pass uncensur'd, under quite another Character than what should belong to the Mystical Body of Christ? This then is the

1. First Reason that Vindicates the Propriety of such Discipline in the Christian Church, viz. to take off the Scandal and Dishonour which for want of it must fall upon this Divine Society. Is it not in the Common sense of Mankind a Scandal, and an Offence to fee Men of Profligate Spirits, and Abominable Practices, and Detestable Vices affociated among the Children of God in the most Sacred Offices and Privileges and lifted among the Number of those who should rather be, what the true Notion of the Christian Church imports; a Society of Saints, call'd of God and separated from the rest of the World by a singular Purity and Holiness of Life? The vindicating then the Glory of God and the Honour of our Religion in the Reputable and Advantageous Character of its Professors, and the taking off all this Scandal and Offence is. I think, a very good Proof how Proper such

a Discipline is for the Church, and how agreeable both to found Reason and to true Religion. And so very Proper, that perhaps the Want of it is much more Mischievous to Religion and to Mankind, than the Greateft Abuses of it that were ever vet to be complain'd of, altho' these also, it must be confes'd, have been very great. But again.) of the cloud syncreth woiling

2. It can scarce be, but that such Discipline must be of some good Effect, generally fpeaking, to the Persons themselves on whom it is duly and regularly executed. For, as the Generality of Mankind cannot but have so much Tenderness for themselves and their Character, as to have some Concern at being shut out from a Society in which, and in which alone, the Worship of God is rightly Perform'd, and the Sacraments of our Religion, the Pledges of God's Favour duly Administred: So to have a Mark of Scandal and Difesteem fixt on 'em on that account, and to be Rejected by their Spiritual Guides as unfit to be Partakers of those Privileges and the Comforts that attend 'em, is what our Author himself cannot think a thing Indifferent to any of Man- Page 110. kind, who believe the Truth of our Religion. If therefore the Church of Christ, or any Part of it be indeed endu'd with fuch a Power, and that Power Faithfully and Honeftly Q 2

neftly Executed: our Adversary must grant that it must be to the Advantage of Christianity and of all its Professors. In that whoever apprehends himfelf in fuch a Case, cannot but Reasonably be Concern'd at it, and Uneafy under it. And the more Conscious any Man is of the Greatness of the Evil by which he has Deferv'd fuch Cenfure and Expulsion: the more likely is he to Consider feriously the Danger of it, and to make all haft by a true Repentance to get out of it. And as the Reforming fuch Sinners, and Reclaiming fuch Offenders is the true End, and chief Aim and Design of all such Spiritual Jurisdiction: so the Natural Tendency of it, thus duly executed, to fuch Ends and Purposes shews how Proper it is for the Christian Church to be Posses'd of it, and how agreeable both to Reason and Religion to make use of it. Nay, indeed the Wisdom of God in fuch a Power is to me very Wonderful and highly to be Ador'd. In that as the Church has no other, or no Greater Power than this: fo by the Help of it the Honour of Christianity was preserv'd, and the Good of its Profesfors very much promoted, and their Diforders reform'd, in those Early Times when the Civil Magistrates took no care of it, and the People had not as yet learn'd to Despise it.

And now, by the help of these Considerations no Man can be at a loss for an Easy and Satisfactory Answer to all the Specious Pretences brought against it by our Adver-

fary. For,

1. As to the Uncharitableness that is a most Unjust Complaint. In that it is not putting a Man into a state of Damnation that was not so when Unexcommunicated, but, when pronounc'd for the just Cause of Immorality and Vice, rather Declaring and Proclaiming what his Condition is without it; Desperate and Deplorable without Repentance. Excluding him from the External Privileges, because Visibly, and Apparently uncapable of the Spiritual Advantages to be receiv'd by them, according to the Conditions of the Gospel, is rather but a more Authoritative Admonition of a Man's not having fufficiently regarded the Conditions upon which the Covenant was first made. So that an Excommunicated Apostate is, without true Repentance, in a state of Damnation by his Apostacy rather than by his Excommunication. The one being little more than a Judicial Act among Men, Declarative of the Person's Condition with respect to God. And as Dangerous and Scandalous Evils should be the only true Causes of it: so the End and Intention of the Sentence is the Reclaiming of the Offender, by which, as the Scandal is taken off and the Incapacity remov'd, fo then the Offender may be re-admitted to Communion. And this I think is fo far from being Uncharitable, that it is the

Greatest Charity in the World.

2. As to hindering a Man from one Duty because of his Neglect of another: 'Tis only when the Neglect in one part had made him uncapable of a due Performance of the other, to God's Honour and his own Advantage. The Prayer of a Good Man is very Commendable and Advantageous: But if the Prayers of the Wicked Shall be turn'd into Sin, and the pretended Devotion and Worship of an Impenitent Sinner becomes an Abomination: the Excluding fuch Perfons from the Public Worship cannot be Unaccountable: cannnot but be just when their Worship is Offensive to God. Scandalous to others, and Unprofitable to themfelves holes where find any tomas

3. As to their having an equal Right to, and Reason for Public Worship as for Private: I answer that neither can be Profitable when the Life is Vicious and the Heart Unsincere. That both are to be Encourag'd, and both to be Commended, when the Heart is Pure, and the Life is Uncorrupt. That as all the Difference then in such a case is not with respect to God and the Person himself, but the Church of God and the Scandal given there-

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in: for that reason a Public Interdict may be Just, when the Private Devotion may be Acceptable. Because God who knows the Sincerity of the Heart Rewards according to that: whereas the Church that must now judge by Outward Appearance in the cafe of Scandal will, and ought to look for some more visible Testimonies and Tryals of Sincerity. A laure of the service to the trust of

4. As to his Courteous Remark, that the best way to Convert a Notorious Offender is to have nothing to do with our Ministry: I must beg leave to tell him, that one of the best Means that I know of to turn a Sinner from the Evil of his Ways, is to bring him to Confider feriously with himself, how Dangerous a Condition he is in, and how Difpleasing and Detestable before God: when his own Immoralities and Impenitent State have made him unfit to receive either Benefit or Comfort by those Divine Ordinances in which God has by the Institutions of the Gospel vouchsaf'd us the Honour to Minister.

5. As to his last Argument, That if the Worship of God; and Receiving the Sacrament be a Duty, we have no Right to Deny it; and if a Crime, the Refusing it can be no Punishment: Let him Remember, that as the Duty and Obligation lays not only to the External Act, but to the Virtuous Disposition of

of the Pure and Penitent Heart; so whereever these are sound we have none, and we
desire no Power to resuse it. But whereever the visible want of these makes the Duty to become a Sin, whether the Resusal be
then a Punishment or no, I care not to dispute, I am sure that it's then a Discipline
both Reasonable and Justifiable for the
Church to Deny it, and a Power and Authority very sit for the Pastors of it to Exercise. And this brings me,

III. To enquire into and fet forth the Bishops and Clergy's Divine Right and Power in this part of Ecclesiastical Turisdiction and Authority. And this is methinks fo very plain, that it will not admit of any long Dispute. Where can the Jurisdiction of any Society be lodg'd, but in the Public Ministers and Governors of it? And to whom can we expect that God should commit the Power and Authority of Excluding any Diforderly Members from a Society. but to those who are entrusted with the Power of Gathering and Incorporating it? That very Care which in their Ministerial Function is incumbent upon them, and the Trust in the Faithful Discharge of their several Offices: shews, I think, beyond all Power of Contradiction, that the Right reminderia d

and Authority of Excommunication must

needs be lodg'd with them.

Thus our Author himself knows it was among the Jews in our Saviour's time, and peculiarly exercis'd by the Apostles with the Miraculous Confirmation of their Judgment by delivering them up unto Satan to be tormented by the Powerful Infults of Evil Spirits in Diseases or otherwise. And thus it continu'd in the fucceeding Ages of the Church for a great while together. And why it should now be taken out of the Hands of the Clergy to be put into the Laity's, any more than Preaching or Administring the Sacraments, I cannot apprehend. The same God who has entrusted them with the one, feems also in that very Institution to have committed to them the other also. There feems to be the fame Reason and the same Authority for them both; and they that are fit to be Entrusted with the Incorporation of this Society, cannot fure but be accounted as fit Persons to Exercise its Discipline and Turisdiction.

'Tis true, I think, that in the Purest and Primitive Times these Church Censures were pass'd in the Public Assemblies and Meetings of Christians for the Worship of God in the most serious and solemn Manner, and with the Consent and General Approbation

probation of the whole Assembly. But this is so far from being an Objection against the Clergy's Right and Ministerial Power in this Jurisdiction, that I could heartily wish that something of the same or like solemn manner of Exercising this Authority were now again restor'd. For I am not defending any Corruption, but only the Divine Rights, Privileges and Advantages of the Christian Institutions; and of Excommunication in particular. And what can our Adversary say against the Clergy's Claim to it then? Why,

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1. 'Tis too great a Power to be trufted Independently in their Hands; and deprives the Civil Magistrate of all Power in the Ecclesiafticals, as much as the Priest in Civils. And consequently, he cannot by Banishment, Impriforment or Death hinder one from Communicating with his Church. I have shewn already that the Clergy can claim no Independent Power by Divine Right but only in the Ministerial Offices of Christianity, and what becomes Absolutely necessary to the due Performance of 'em. That even this Independent Power as to the Divine Original and Rife of it which is from God, is yet under the Rule and Direction of the Civil Magistrate, as to the External Manner and due Execution of it. And it is therefore very conconfistent with his Supremacy, in that it is claiming no farther Independent Jurisdiction, than what becomes Necessary to the due Worship of God and Practice of Religion, according to the Doctrins and Precepts of the Gospel. And as this is known by our Author to be the Doctrin of the Church of England, so to tell his Reader that such a Power in the Church cannot admit the State by Banishment, Imprisonment or Death to hinder one from Communicating with it: is fuch a way of Reasoning, as 'tis a hard Matter to keep ones Countenance and be ferious at the Reading it. The Magistrate must not put a Criminal to Death, because he cuts him off from the Communion of the Church. Where did he learn this fine Master-piece in Logic, this Curious Method of Argumentation? Well, I fee a Man cannot go over to the Church of Rome for nothing. Upon a very short Continuance in that Communion, he always brings back some of its choice Rarities for him to value himself upon. If the Clergy have a Divine Right as to Excommunication, the Magistrate ought not to put any Christian into Prison, Exile, or to Death, because that is to Excommunicate him. Did not our Author laugh in his fleeve when he drew up this Argument, and thought of putting this Fallacy upon us? To me I own it feems too Trifling and Empty either to deferve, or want a ferious Answer. But.

2. He has another Objection not yet taken notice of, of the same size and softness with the former. 'Tis this. That if the Priests Censures have no Power to change the Mind, 'tis Punishing to no purpose, or worse than none, Page 115 the making Hypocrites. So that if he has not the Qualifications of Omniscience and Infallibility, the Change may be for the worse. I have already shew'd, that Church Censures were originally Defign'd for, and have a Natural Tendency to Reforming Sinners, and Reclaiming 'em of their Vices. And now our Wife Adversary tells us, that if they do not change the Mind as well as the outward Behaviour of Men, they only make them Hypocrites, and so not good Men, but worse than they were before. I might dispute it with him here whether Hypocrifie is not better than Profaneness. But I need it not. Men may be made Hypocrites by Excommunication, and therefore such a Punishment is Unreasonable and Unfit for a Prieft to execute. This is his Argument. Well, bring it to the Civil Power, and tell him that his Whipping and Stocks, and the Threatnings of Death have no power to change the mind, and thereby only make Men Hypo-

Hypocrites, and constrain them to Sin more privately, and for that Reason he neither has nor ought to have any Power of Jurisdiction and Punishment over them. And when he has confidered what Answer is proper to be made in that case, if he finds it not fufficient and fatisfactory to his own Argument also in the Case now before us. it will be then time enough to look out for a better. In the mean while, the End of all Punishment whether by Civil or Ecclefiaftical Power, is to reftrain the Wickedness of Mankind, and if possible to make them better. And both Shame and Smart have a tendency thereto. But tho' none but God can change the Mind, and Heart, and without that all Restraint will be in outward Actions only: Yet this is no good Objection against either Civil Punishments or Church Censures. In that tho' Men are never so obstinately resolved not to be Reclaimed, it's yet an advantage to all Mankind and to the Church of God, to Reftrain tho' but the Open, Publick, Scandalous Practice of all great Iniquities.

However, the more effectually to prevent Hypocrific on this occasion, I shall proceed now in the

now in the wood was to and it sail saddening

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IV. Fourth place, To shew of what Moment and Importance Excommunication is. and how to be effeemed and regarded by a Christian: To which end it should be confidered ; which the string of the

1. That as God has but one Church. one Myftical Body, of which he is the true

and only Head; and as all Christians and Regular Congregations of Christians whatloever, however distant in Place, and different in Ceremonies and Rites, being united unto him in one Body, by the fame common Faith, and Worthip, and Sacraments administred by his Authority; and by one Common Ministry sent and Authorised by him our only Supreme Legislator and Governor: So there is indeed no Promife of Salvation made to any one, but as they are Members of this Church, and continue in All. 4. 12.115 Communion. There is no other Name under Heuven given unto Man whereby we can be Saved, but that of Jefus Christ; nor any. Pardon of Sins and Eternal Life Covenant ed to be bestowed by him but on the Conditions of Faith and Holiness, and Religious Worship, according to the Laws and Inflitutions and Sacraments of the Gofpel. He therefore that is out of the Church of Christ, is out of the Covenant of Grace, and out of the Ordinary and Regular way of Salva-

tion.

christ's Church, nor has Communion with Him by the Instituted Ordinances of the Gospel, he has not any promise of Erernal Happiness made to him. But then I must add.

2. That as God Inflituted this Society, its Sacraments, Ordinances and Discipline for the Edification of his People, and not for their Destruction; and gave this Authority to his Ministers for the Honour and Good of his Church, and not to support their Arbitrarious Proceedings : So if it shall so happen that they are False to their Trust and Unfaithful in their Duty, and turn out from the Communion of Saints, those who by their Faith and Principles, their Practice and their Worship are Pleasing to God and live agreeably to his Laws: Such a Sentence tho' it be Indicial upon Earth, it shall be of no Validity in Heaven. And the it excludes Men from the outward Communion of the lo godh Divine Ordinances here, it shall not obstruct the Inward Communication of God's Spirit here, nor of Erernal Life hereafter. Because tho' God has tied us up to Rules, yet he has not so tied up himself, but that when his Inflitutions and Ordinances are perverted from the Use and Purpose that he Appointed them for, he then both can and will, Tride

will, no doubt, vouchsafe both Divine Grace and Eternal Salvation in a more Extraordi-

And this made me fay in the beginning.

nary way.

that the Effects and Fruits of Excommunication depend very much on the Causes and the Confequences thereof. If the Cause be Unreasonable and Unjust, and our Behaviour thereupon be nevertheless Meek and Modest and Humble, and without any nefarious Contempt of the Authority of Christ's Church and the obligation of his Institutions: Such Excommunication I confess, as it shall not much affect the Souls, fo it needs not much affect the Consciences of Men. But on the other hand, if the cause of this Excommunication be Just and Reasonable, as proceeding from any scandalous Vices and Immoralities, or from fuch a contempt of the Ordinances of God and the Authority of his Church, which carries virtually in it every other Irregularity; and if Men behave themfelves under fuch a just Sentence with Profane Derision and Scorn, then I think that fuch a Sentence is, as I may fay, the Sentence of God himfelf, Pronounced by his Authority, derived upon his Ministry to that very End and Purpole: And most certainly as agreeable to his Will, as it is in purfuance of and Conformity to his Laws. And as verily

Bishop of Sarum, Artic. 33.

rily as I believe the Truth of the Gospel, and the Divine Authority of our Religion. and the necessity of our Christian Sacraments as Means of Grace and Conditions of Salvation: fo do I in my Conscience as verily believe, That what the Christian Church thus binds on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven. And that a Sentence so passed, and lived under in a Profane Contempt, and without true Repentance and Reconciliation to the Church of Christ: shall as effectually Exclude such Sinners from the Communications of God's Holy Spirit and Sanctifying Grace, as from the External Communion of Christians. And however lightly fome People may think of fuch a State; as to my felf, I must own from my very Heart and Soul, that I could not but have the utmost Dread of it as extremely Dangerous to my Future Happiness and Everlasting Peace. Not upon the account of any Power which God has committed to Men his Ministers over the Souls and Salvation of hisPeople: but in confideration of the Virtue and Authority of his own Divine Laws, Ordinances and Institutions. as he fent his Son into the World to gather unto himself a Church out of the Apostate and loft Race of Mankind, and has Promis'd Salvation to those only who are Members of Christ's Body, and live in Communion with Him

Him by his Holy Ordinances: so those who either Refuse to enter into this Holy Society, or Disdain to Continue, or for their Profanenes, Iniquity and Impious Contempt are justly cast out of it: seem to me, I confess, to have Porseited and Lost all Claim to its Promises, and all just Expectation of its Rewards. To be altogether as Heathens and Publicans, in a state of Apostacy and Sin, and out of a Covenant of Grace. And then I do not know what Condition is more justly and reasonably to be fear'd.

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CHAP. IX.

Of Toleration and Persecution.

E that would fet up for an Universal Toleration of all Religions in a Christian Country, must first shew that the Nature and Constitution of the Christian Religion will admit of that. Or otherwise, in the very first Step which he makes towards fuch a Defign, he puts the Christian Magistrate upon acting contrary to his Religion The Sense of this, I veriand Confcience. ly believe, was the first thing which put a late Author not only upon maintaining, that every Man has a Natural Right of Worshipping God according to his Conscience, and of chusing what Religion he thinks best: but moreover of afferting, that even Christianity it self was first Propagated, and the Christian Church first Establiso'd upon this Natural Right alone, without any Additional Rights, Powers or Authority from God.

The Falseness of which Notion as to the Christian Church, is, I hope, sufficiently and satisfactorily set forth in the foregoing Chapters. I come now to consider the Principle it self; and the Great Design and Pur-

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Page 12,

pag. 12.

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pose which this Author aims at in all this whole Performance. I mean, his Claim of a Natural, Fundamental Right in all Mankind to an Unrestrain'd Liberty and Boundless Toleration of all manner of Religions, and Principles, and Perswasions, and Worship, and Communities whatsoever without Limitation of Expansion.

To this End, as he allows Atheism to be

mitation or Exception.

the only thing that falls within the Civil Magistrate's Cognizance and Power, and unfit to be Tolerated among Men: fo that too is not out of any Regard or Zeal for God, but only as the Belief of a God is the necessary Foundation and Bond of all Civil Society. And thus also he may punish formal Blasphemy, Profaneness, and common Swearing as Things against the General Good, and tending to Subvert the Foundation on which the Preservation and Happiness of the Society is mainly built. But, had not Almighty God of his Infinite Wisdom so fram'd Religion, that the Principles of it had been useful to Kingdoms, and Nations, and Civil Societies: the Magistrate, it seems, could have had nothing to do in it; nor whatever Zeal he might have had for God's Honour, must he have dar'd to Concern himself at all about it. For if you speak of his Authority farther, our Author will tell you, That in all other Religious Matters Mankind

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Of Toleration and Persecution.

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are still in a state of Nature. And that whereas they have generally interwoven into their Religion some meerly Speculative Points, and Particular Modes of Worlbip: in these Things none has a Right to prescribe to another, but every Man must Judge for himself of the Forms and Modes of Worship, the Doctrins and Ceremonies of any Church, not only before be joyns himself to it, but afterwards. As to these Things none are oblig'd by a Majority, but every one has for himself a Negative; and those that cannot go with the rest, are to form themselves into a Church in the best manner they can. And as the main End for which the Magistrate is entrusted with his Power is the Preservation of Mens Liberties in all such things as could be done without detriment to the Public; by which Liberties they may form themselves into what Companies, Meetings or Clubs they think fit, whether for Business or Pleasure: much more where Conscience is concern'd, he can have no Right to abridge Men of this Liberty. But is as much oblig'd to protect 'em, in the way they chuse of Worshipping God, as in any other indifferent Matter. So that here is as direct afferting to all Mankind a Natural Right to claim an Universal Liberty and Unbounded Toleration of all Religions, as can, I think, any where be had. And in Consequence of it, putting even the Christian Magistrate under the Duty and Obligation

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p. 15. p. 16.

gation of giving the same Protection to an Heathen in his Bacchanalia, in his Impure Solemnities to Venus, and in his Sacrificing his Children to Moloch, if that could be done without any Injury to the Public Good of the Society, that he is under to the Pure and Holy Worship of the Blessed Jesus. For it is not a Liberty of Principles, Perfwafion or Opinions alone that is here defended, but of fetting up fuch Religious Societies and Communities for Divine Worship: as any the smallest number of Men shall think fit to Espoyse and plead Conscience in behalf of. The Falseness and Unreasonableness of which Affertions I shall now Endeavour to lay open. In which Attempt I could shew this Gentleman how Lame, and Imperfect an Account he gives of the End and Reason of Government; when he makes the Good of the Society in defending the feveral Members of it from Injuries and Wrongs the Supreme Law. In that there are some Things which cannot perhaps be prov'd Injurious to another: which yet the Christian Magistrate is oblig'd in Conscience by Laws and Penalties to prevent. But I will keep closer to the Case now in hand. And that my Adversary may not too violently fall upon me as one of those Page 16. Self-interested and designing Men, who are for hotly maintaining the Persecuting Doctrin against

gainst all the Pleas and Powers of Conscience: I must argue with him on this Sub-

ject.

1. By way of Concession, and granting to him fincerely and without any scruple, that Religion and Conscience are not to be forc'd. I mean, that no Man is by Bodily Tortures, and Torments, nor by any other Violence either on his Person or Estate to be Conftrain'd and Forc'd to Confess the Truth of any Doctrin which in his Judgment he believes to be false. Nor to Practise any thing in the Worship of God, or Exercise of Religion, which he is verily Perswaded to be finful, and contrary to the Laws and Will of God. The Powers even of Natural Conscience so far as this, I believe to be Sacred and Inviolable, and on this account. That every Man's Judgment and Knowledge is, and must be so far a Rule to him in all his Actions and in all his Obedience to God: that the doing contrary to it must needs be finful, as including a Confent to what we believe and apprehend to be contrary to the Will and Pleafure of the Almighty? And this I think must undeniably be granted to be what St. Paul himself intended, when he faid, What soever is not of Rom. 14. Faith is Sin. And therefore by any Violence or Severity of Perfecutions to Force and Conftrain Men to act against this Rule :

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is to force 'em to Sin and to be Wicked. Which no Power whatever on Earth can have a Right and Authority to constrain Men to. And if all Christians would but faithfully and fincerely Govern themselves by this Principle, which I freely confess to him to be both Reasonable and True: it would effectually and totally prevent all the Inhuman Cruekies and Outragious Barbarities of one Community towards another, which have made Christianity so great a Scandal and a Name of fuch Derision and Contempt among all its Enemies. As totally and as effectually as that Licentious Indulgence of all the most vile Principles and Opinions which the Author of this Book in his most Excellent Wisdom thinks a much better Security. But then I must obferve again, and the state wieversell

Argument and Objection against all Persecution whatsoever for Religion: yet it by no means concludes for an Universal and Unlimited Toleration. Nor by any means makes it the Duty of the Christian Magistrate to Grant and Establish such a one. In that, as there is a mighty Difference betwixt Forcing Conscience, and giving it an Institute Indulgence in all Liberties; between Constraining Men on one side to Profess a Religion which they believe salse, or to Re-

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nounce a Religion which they believe true, and Granting a Liberty of the Public Exercife of any Religion whether true or false, on the other: fo there is not the same Reafon for, nor the same Obligation to the one, that there is for and to the other. And that because the Consequences of each of 'em are not alike. He that forces a Man to any Religion contrary to his Conscience, in that very thing forces him to Sin. But he that without Forcing him to Renounce his Religion only Denies him the Public Exercise of it, and the Liberties of Erecting Public Communities for that Purpose cannot always be faid to do fo. In that no Man can have the same Right, and be under the same Inviolable Obligation to the Public Exercise of his Religion in all Places and Countries, and to the fetting up Open and Public Communities for fuch a Purpole: that he has, and is under to the Enjoyment of it as to himself. And the Reason of this Difference feems to me to arise from the different States and Capacities of Private Perfons and Magistrates. A Private Person is to be answerable to God for himself alone, and for his own Religion chiefly, and in the first Place, but not for the Religion and Principles of his Neighbour. He is oblig'd indeed in Reason and Duty, if he thinks his own Religion more Excellent and more Necessary

cessary than that which he finds other Men Professing and Believing, to offer his Reafons and Arguments for that purpose, so far as the Wisdom of the Government which he lives under will think sit to admit of such a Practice. But the obligation to this does not rise so high, but that it must be exercised under the Jurisdiction and Permission of the Civil Magistrate, and may, as to Publick Attempts of this kind, be Controlled and Over-ruled by him. Much more then the open Profession and publick Exercise of Religion in Established Assemblies and Communities may be so restrained.

And the Reason of all this is, That tho every Private Person is to judge for himself. and to chuse his own Religion according to his own Conscience, as he shall be account able before God; yet it is not his Province to judge for his Brethren, and to determin what Religion and what Principles shall be Published and Propagated and Promoted among other Men. But the Prince with the Supreme Legislative Power, has the fole Right and Authority under God, of Judging and determining this. I mean what Religion, what Principles, and what Worthip shall have the benefit of Publick Approbation and Protection. And tho this is a Doctrin that runs directly thwart to what the Author that A profit has an encountered and another of I now write against Asserts and Maintains: Yet I doubt not but that I shall be able

I. To prove the Truth and certainty of it: And then,

Objections that may be made against it.

As to the Truth of it, I think it will depend very much upon this one main Point, which this Author and I are not yet well agreed upon, viz. Whether Princes, or Supreme Legislative Powers, are by their Office and Station, to take care of no more than the preservation of the Publick Good of the Society which respects their present and Temporal Welfare only: Or whether the true End, Reason, and Divine Institution of Government does not Authorize and Empower and Oblige 'em to concern themfelves also for the Spiritual welfare of the People, in regard to Religion and their Souls. Our Adversary is of the former Opinion, and grounds his Notion on one or two fuch Principles as these: That the Magistrate has not, or in Right can have no more Power than what the People shall consent and agree to derive upon him; and that they can derive upon him no more Power than what is necessary to the ends of Government, which he tells

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us is the Good of the Society and the Supreme Law of all.: Infomuch that all Church or Religious Considerations must give way to it. I am of the latter Opinion, and ground my Principle upon this. That the Magistrate is invested from God with with all that Power and Authority which is necessary to answer all the true Ends of Government for which it was Ordain'd and Appointed of the Almighty. Of which the Care and Support of Divine Worship and true Religion. feems to me undeniably to be one. In the determination of this fingle Point, will the main stress of this present Debate also be determin'd. For if the Magistrates Power does not otherwise extend to Religion than as that may affect the focial Vertues and Publick Good of the Society: Then indeed I do not know but that this Author's Principles for an Universal Toleration may be true. But if the Supreme Legislative Power in the true Ends and Defigns of Government extends to Religion also, with refpect to Men's Spiritual Welfare and the good of their Souls: Then I think that our Principle will be found most Reasonable. viz. That the Civil Magistrate in every Kingdom, must have a Right finally to judge and determin what Religion or Religious Principles and Opinions shall be publickly allowed and tolerated in his Dominions.

ons. And if this be true, a Boundless and Unlimited Toleration of 'em all must be Unreasonable.

Well then, but how shall this Debate be determin'd between our Author and my felf? Why, if he will allow the Judgment of Almighty God in this case, and the declared Reasons of his Favourable or Afflicting Providences towards Kings, according to the Discharge or Neglect of this part of their Regal Power and Authority, to be admitted as a Rule and Obligation to other Princes and Magistrates: This will then admit of an easie Solution, and a plain and certain Determination.

Let this Author then remember that the Kings of Israel and Judah were several of them Reprov'd and Blam'd and Punish'd by God, for not exercifing their Power to the Suppressing and hindring of Idolatry and the Publick Exercise of a falle Religion; and Rewarded and Bleffed in an extraordinary manner, for their Zeal and Care in employing their Authority to that Good Purpose. Neither of which could be Reafonable and Reconcilable with the Wisdom and Goodness and Righteousness of God: If Magistrates had no Power or were under no obligations of Duty to that purpose. And both of which must be obligatory, and a Duty necessarily incumbent on 'em:

if the Dispensations of Divine Providence towards these several Princes were accord-

ing to Truth and Righteousness.

Let us apply these General Reasonings to any one or more Particular Cases, and see whether our Adversaries or our Notions will best confist with the Scripture account of things. 'Tis faid of Asa King of Judah, That he did that which was Right in the Eyes of the Lord, as did David his Father; and he took away the Sodomites out of the Land, and removed all the Idols that his Father had made. And alfoMaacah his Mother, evenher be remov'd from being Queen, because she had made an Idol in a And Asa destroyed her Idol and burnt Grove. it by the Brook Kidron. And of Jehosbaphat his Son, when he was reproved for joinin War with wicked Ahab, it is yet said of him, Nevertheless there are Good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the Groves out of the Land. And to Jehoram the Son of this Jehosbaphat, there came a Writing from Elijah the Prophet Saying, Thus Saith the Lord God of David thy Father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy Father, nor in the ways of Asa King of Judah, who removed the Idols and burnt them, and took away the Groves, but hast walked in the

way of the Kings of Ifrael, and by Marrying 13. the Daughter of Ahab, hast made Judah and 14.

the Inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring like

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the whoredoms of the House of Ahab, by Tolerating his Idolatrous Worship countenanced by his Queen, that is the plain meaning of it; Behold, with a great Plague will the Lord smite thy People, and thy Children, and all thy Goods: And thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy Bowels, until thy Bowels fall out,

by reason of thy sickness day by day.

Let us view and scan these Passages, and fee how they and our Author's Principles can be reconciled. Could it be Right in Asa, and Good in Jeboshaphat to suppress Idolatry, and to intermeddle in matters of Religion and Conscience, and not Suffer their Subjects to worship God in such a way as they thought best, but to Judge and Determine for their People what Religion they should be of ? Could this be a Glorious Part of one King's Character, and the Reason of Curses and Calamities, and Judgments from God to another. that they broke in upon the Natural Liberties and Inherent Fundamental Rights that all People have of chusing their own Religion, and of setting up what Communities for Publick Wor-(bip they plead themselves oblig'd in Conscience to fet up? Trather apprehend that our Bold Author would tell you, if he dar'd to do fo, that this which we call the Scripture account of things, is only the Church Cant of Priestcraft, and of a Pragmatical Priesthood, who are for setting up of Tyranny and Cruelty, and Perfecution.

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fecution. Let him pretend what he will, he must either give up his own Principles, or else Reject the truth and justice of that Character which the Scripture most plainly gives both of Men and Things. If our Author's Principles are true, That Princes have neither Right nor Power to Judge of the Publick Worship of their People, nor to restrain them from forming themselves into Religious Communities, as they pretend themselves in Conscience bound to do: Then it could be neither Right nor Good in the Kings of Judah to suppress the Publick Worship of their People tho' Idolatrous. On the other hand, if those Kings fuppreffing Idolatrous Worship was indeed as the Scripture tells us, Right and Good before God, and Jehoram's Toleration of it highly Criminal and Offensive notwithstanding all their pretences of Conscience: then the Confequence will be this; That Rulers and Governors are in Religious Matters also so far the Judges for, and Guardians of the Society, that they have Authority and Power from God to suppress any Publick Idolatrous Worship, and to restrain any Publick Propagation of Principles and Opinions which they believe to be Corrupt and Dangerous, Offensive to God, and Prejudicial to the People. And accordingly a pretence in the People to a Natural Right of ferting up Publick Worship, and Communities Man's Private Opinion and pretended Conficience, is a Mistake and a Delusion. It is what God does not appear in the Jewish Kings ever to have Approved when they Tolerated it, but to have Punished with very great Severity. And therefore having thus far defended the Truth of what I undertook to prove, I come

II. To vindicate it from the Objections that are made against it. The Chief of which I think are these that follow.

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1. That fuch a Principle, he will think, not confiftent with the Sacred and Inviolable Powers of Conscience. I answer. That this Author feems to me very much to mistake, and missepresent the Inviolable Powers of Conscience, when he fays, That all are under an Indispensable Obligation of Wor- Page 14. shipping God after the manner that they think most agreeable to his will; and consequently Page 16. that the Magistrate is as much oblig'd to Protect 'em in the way they chuse of Worshipping him, as in any other indifferent Matter. In which Words, if our Author intends no more, than that every Man has a Natural Right of not being Constrain'd by Force or Authority to Act against his Conscience, by Profesting a Religion to be true, which

he Believes to be falfe, or by Doing any thing which he is firmly Perfwaded to be against the Will of God: there is a great deal to be faid on his fide, and I have already made him fair Concessions that way. But if he removes the Cafe from a Conscience perswaded of the Sinfulness of any Fact, to a Conscience in two Lawful ways of Worship, Esteeming the one Better, and in it felf more Agreeable than the other: in this his Doctrin will not hold Good. Every Man is not under such an Indispensable Obligation of Worshipping God after that manner which be judges best. In that in two different ways of Worship, the one of em is in it felf more Pure and Perfect, and confequently most agreeable to God's Will; yer the other, tho' less Perfect, but not Unlawful, may in some Cases and Circumstances more Reasonably be chosen and Comply'd with. Thus for Example; The Apostles were fensible that the Jewish Rites were abolish'd upon our Saviour's Paffion, Refurrection, and Ascension; and Circumcision also with them. And yet meerly to avoid Offence and in order to gain upon the Jews, they complied for a great while with both the Temple Worship and the Synagogues, giving up their Liberty in tenderness to their Brethren, and continuing in a Worship on that account which they knew to be

be less Perfect and less Pure, and less agreeable to God's Will. And why as much regard should not be shewed to Publick Authority, as to the Private Sentiments of Men I cannot apprehend. In this case then the Magistrate has a Right and Power of Overruling, tho' not in the other. But,

2. It's pretended again highly Unreasonable and Abfurd, that the Magistrate Should chuse a Religion for his People. I Answer: He does not chuse what Principles every Man shall Believe in his own Breast, and what Religion he shall be absolutely of. but only what Religion shall be admitted to be publickly owned and Exercised and Protected. And he who cannot in his Judgment and Conscience comply with that, if he has yet the liberty to enjoy his own Sentiments to himself, without being constrained on the one hand to fore-go and renounce them; or permitted on the other to Publish and Defend them, he has, I think, all the Power and Liberty that he can Reafonably pretend to: In that, tho' it would be injurious to him to deny him this; yet on the other hand, if his Religion proves to be false, and his Principles corrupt, it is likely to be very Dangerous and Mischievous to the People to fuffer him to do more. And therefore, tho' he may have a right to Judge for himself, yet methinks that is all

that he can pretend to. If the Publication of corrupt Worship and wicked Principles, may Pervert and Debauch a People, and have a very mischievous Influence both on their Faith and Manners: Every Body will perceive that the Governors both in Church and State, which were especially Ordained and Appointed of God for the sake of Religion as well as of the Good Government of the World, and for the encouragement of Vertue and Piety, and the suppressing all Vice and Naughtiness, must have it in their Power to Judge and to Determine how far these

shall or shall not be Tolerated.

3. It may possibly be pleaded again, That if a Man is under an obligation to Publick Worship, he must also have a Right to the doing it in such a way and manner as his Conscience dictates. In that he who has a Right to the End, has also a Right to the Means that are necessary to that End. I Anfwer here as I did above in a like Cafe. A Man's obligation and Right to the Publick Worship of God, are founded on the Ends and Reasons for which Publick Worfhip was Appointed and Commanded, viz. The Honour of God among the Children of Men. And in consequence of this, the Obligation and Right will both depend upon our performing this Worship in such a manner as answers the End and Reason of that ComCommand, and not otherwise. Has any Mag an Obligation upon him to Worship God after the manner that Moloch and Baal Peor were Worshipped, or Bacchus, Venus, and Priapus among the Romans? If not, neither has he a Right to the Exercise of such Worthip, but must be overruled and controlled by that Civil Power and Magistrate whom God has ordained to take care of and preserve the true Religion. And this will

bring us to our Adversary's

4. Last and most Formidable Objection in this Matter, viz. That if the Magistrate has a power in Religious Matters so far as to protect the true Religion and suppress the false ones, he must then be allowed to Page 19. judge which is true, and which is false, that he may Protect the one, and Suppress the other. And this not only gives him a Right with his Legislative Authority, if they be Mistaken in their Judgments, to establish Error and Corruptions, instead of Truth and Piety; but also to suppress God's own Religion by his own Authority. And is the true Foundation of all that Barbarity and Tyranny and Persecution, which I yet profels to Difallow. And in the end of it tends only to countenance Distimulation and Hypoerisie rather than Religion. Whereas Hu- Page 118. man Nature, if left to to itfelf would not be so 211. Depraved; for Men would as kindly receive Arguments

guments offered to their Consideration in Religious as in Philosophical Matters. To all this ista your of not beat to

I reply,

1. As has been already done above on a like occasion; That it's no Arguing against any Man's having a just Right to the Exercife of fuch a Power: That it may be abufed to very ill purposes. All Power on Earth that I yet know of may be abused, and employ'd to very Pernicious and Mischievous Purposes; altho? in its Original Institution defigned for our Benefit and Good. Government itself tho' intended for the Advanvantage and Preservation of Mankind, may ver be turned into Oppression, and Cruelty, and Tyranny. And yet it nevertheless appears that Government was originally from God. The Powers of Conscience too may be Abused, and have doubtless very often been made use of to very ill and scandalous Practices. And yet I must allow the Power of Conscience very much to be regarded. So also as to the Magistrate's Judging what Religion and Principles are to be Publickly allowed and Tolerated. If there be any good Reason or Scripture, as I think there is, to prove that God has made them Guardians of the Publick Society in Religious Matters and Principles, as well as in other things, it will be no conclusive Argument against such proof of the Power that it may be Abufed.

Of Toleration and Persecution.

fed. They ought indeed to be Impartial, and Honest, and Careful to employ it to the good Ends for which it was at first appointed of God; The Defence of Truth, and Innocency and Vertue. But if through either Ignorance or Wickedness it happens otherwife; Rulers must be accountable to God, and Subjects may Petition, and Reason, and perswade, and Apologize, and do all things in their own Defence that the Laws of God and their Country will allow. But still, from the Abuse of Power in some particular Cases to conclude in General, that Magistrates have no fuch Authority, nor any Right to exercife it, is a deceitful, false, dangerous, and Mischievous way of Arguing. And can be of no just weight and consequence, until Mankind shall have Infallible Security that no just Authority shall ever be mis-employ'd.

all this Licentiousness to the People, is no proper or effectual way to prevent any such Corruptions or Abuses of what kind soever. As to Cruelty and Persecution, it's well known that the multitude are always Violent, and in their Turn have been as Outrageous and Severe in all kind of ill Treatment, as the worst of Rulers could be. And as to the Corruptions of Religion, one would wonder where this Author has Liv'd, and S 4 what

what Observations he has made of the easiness of Mankind to be Imposed on; that he could pretend to tell the World, That Human Nature if left to it felf, would not easily mistarry in these Matters. Was not Mankind in this respect left to themselves enough in the old World before the Flood, when the Priesthood was not in any distinct Order of Men, which our Author thinks fo Dangerous an Abomination? And yet it's plain that if they had not miscarried in Religious matters, they had not been fo miferably De-

ftrov'd.

med schedownianismobels then Nor in truth can any Man wonder that it should be so fince that time, who will but feriously consider whet Gross and Intolerable as well as Inexcufable Ignorance, and especially as to Religious and Spiritual marters, is found in the Generality of Mankind. And how much Human Nature is Swaved and Byaffed, and ledaway by their Paffions and Inclinations, their corrupt Affections and loofe Defires. And by the Allurements of Interest and Ambition, Bodily Pleasures and fenfual Delights, are drawn not only to the Neglect, but even to the Contempt of Religious Ordinances and Laws. And to the perpetration of the most Vicious and Abominable Actions. To this we are to impute the Universal Corruption and Depravation of the old World, for which they perifhed. And

And to these two Causes are we also to Impute all the vile Wickedness and detestable Debauchery of these latter Ages, which God has endeavoured by the Gospel Ordinances and Ministry to prevent and restrain. And our Author, Conscious perhaps how little he has been Influenced by the one, would keep himself in Countenance for the Evils he has done, by Reviling and Vilifying and Depre-

ciating the other.

The Clergy, he tells us, have been very Irregular and Corrupt. But have Lay-men in all Ages been only Paffive in these Depravations? Have they had no Share, no Liking, no Endeavours towards all this Iniquity? Let the Spirit of God Determine this Point between us. The Prophets Prophesie Jer. 5. 13. fully, and the Priests bear Rule by their Means, and my People love to have it so, and what will ye do in the End thereof? If our Adversary doubts in himself whether the Priests Corrupted the People, or the People the Priests: let us hear the Prophet again. This 16a.30.12, is a Rebellious People, Lying Children, Children that will not bear the Law of the Lord. Which say to the Seers, see not, and to the Prophets, Prophesie not unto as Right things, Speak unto us Smooth things, Prophesie Deceits. Was this the Temper of the Jewish People only, or are the rest of Mankind also liable to the like Degeneracy and Iniquity? If

they are, it's a plain Case that our Author did not know Human Nature well enough. when he said. That when left to it self it would not be so Deprav'd and Wicked; nor Page 118. Religion be so vilely Corrupt as the Priests and the Clergy have made it. But whether true or false it is no great Matter; this is a Handle given, that Religion has been Corrupt, and the Clergy with it. And this is a Plaufible Topic for those to enlarge upon, who Hate both the Ministry and the Divine Offices which they Minister in; and are Delighted and Glad from their Heart when they can find any Colourable Pretence to Revile, and Scorn, and Reproach, and Ridicule 'em. 1 11/ 1910 approximation arms

In a Word, whatever Corruptions and Depravations of Human Nature are to be found, and however Justly to be Lamented: yet to suppose that the Generality of Mankind would not have fal'n into 'em unless misled and seduc'd by their Guides, Teachers and Governors: is a severe Resection upon the Wisdom of God himself in the Institution of Civil Government, as well as of Ecclesiastical. In that the very End, Reason and Design of that Institution was to Prevent, Restrain, and Punish such Corruptions.

And however fafe and secure from all such Danger and Mischief our Author, in Desi-

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ance of all Divine Institutions, may conceit Mankind to be when left to themselves to Worship God according to their Consciences and fuch a Religion as they think fit to chuse: every Body may perceive, who will confider that Conscience, or Judgment, is under a Mighty Influence and Byass in the Determination of it, from all our Passions and Affections, our Inclinations and Defires. Our Author knows very well, that it is not a thing unheard of for Men to change Religions as they ferve their Interest, and under the Cry and Pretence of Confeience to Confult only Ambition and Advantage: And what a Man does at one time to Minister to his Avarice, he may do at another to Gratifie his Lusts and Sensuality. And indeed we daily find that Men who are strongly addicted to finful Pleasures, and to Gratifie their Senfual Lufts: do not always chuse that which has the Greatest Reason on its side and the brightest Evidence of Truth ; but that which fooths their Confeiences most, complies best with their Corrupt Dispositions, and so appears the most easy to em, And while Men are under fuch Influences as these in the Choice of their Religion, and often Proftitute the Sacred Powers of Conscience both to Profit and Pleafure: 'tis not hard to take a Prospect beforehand what the Scene of things would be, if all our Legal Establishments were once broken down, and an Unlimited Toleration of all Religions without Exception made the only hinding Law. To have Paganism fet up and Defended in one Assembly, Deifm in another, Mahometanism in a third, Judaifm in a fourth, and all these Openly and Publicly Preaching, and Arguing, and Reafoning against the Authority of our Scriptures, and the Necessity of Revelation, and the Reasonableness of our Redemption, and the whole Truth of the Christian Religion in a Christian Country, what a horrid Scene would this be? And this too among People who as not capable of Judging the Weight or Weakness of all Reasons offer'd, are the more eafily drawn away to those things that are Grateful and Pleasing to their Vicious Inclinations and Corrupt Affections. Such a Toleration as this would certainly be the most Serviceable and Agreeable thing on Earth to Popery also, as well as to our Deifts and Antichriftians. And They too would gain great Advantage in it as well as the others: and for the same Reason. Not that they have better Proof and Evidence on their fide: but only that by the Corruptions of it they have made it more Pleasing to those who are strongly addicted to please their Lusts.

And as it is in the Forelight and just Apprehension of such Evils, that I have meddled at all in this Matter, and Asserted the Governor's Right and Power both in Church and State to take care of the Religion of the People, and to Prevent, and Restrain all those False, Profane and Corrupt Principles which by reason of the great Degeneracy and Gorruption of Human Nature are Necessarily to be restrain'd: So to shew my Adversary that I am far from instigating Violence and Persecution under this Pretence, I

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3. Laftly. That tho' the Rulers and Governors in Church and State must be Confess'd the Proper Judges what Religion and Religious Principles are to be Allow'd and Tolerated, and Protected in every Nation: yet not so as that their Municipal Laws alone can make any Religion binding on the Consciences of the People. No, every Man as to this must be firmly perswaded in his own Mind, that it is True and Lawful, or else his Compliance with it is a Sin. And for the same Reason the Magistrate is not Oblig'd, or Empower'd, by Violence and Constraint, to Force every Subject to be of the Religion Establish'd. the Religion Establish'd. No, in doing that, when a Man's Conscience is indeed against it, he constrains him to Sin. Which is neither Pleasing to God, nor Agreeable to the

the End for which his Authority was Ordain'd. And if the Persons so Favour'd and Spar'd can be content to enjoy their Private Sentiments to themselves: this I think will effectually prevent all Cruelty and Persecution.

But if Persons of a Different Religion from that Establish'd in any Country shall think themselves under an Indispensable Obligation of Conscience to Assemble for Public Worship in their way, which was undeniably the Case of the Primitive Christians: they must, as the Primitive Christians did, by a Peaceable and Submiffive Behaviour Recommend themselves to the Favourable and Good Opinion of the Government. And by Modest Petitions, and Humble Reprefentations fet forth the Excellency and Divine Authority of the Holy Profession which they appear so Zealous for. And if by these Methods they can prevail, Happy are they. But if not, they must prepare to be Content for God's and Conscience sake to suffer Persecution as the Primitive Christians did. But not, because Persecution is a Grievance, cry out against all Authorities and Powers both in Church and State, and Exclaim against all Legal Establishments in favour of Religion; and fet up for a Natural, Inherent Fundamental Right of being Exempt from all Law, Jurisdiction and Authority as to Religious ligious Matters; and of pulling down all Establishments that every Man may do what feems Good in his own Eyes. This is not at all agreeable to the Sentiments either of Christians or Heathens, neither to Scripture nor Reason, to the Laws neither of God nor Man; nor to the Ends and Reasons for which Government was Ordain'd. And therefore, tho' the pretence of avoiding Perfecution is very Plaufible; because Persecution is indeed a very Grievous Evil: yet, I cannot apprehend that God ever intended to put things into fuch a Posture, as that Perfecution should become utterly Impossible, and all Tryals and Temptations of that kind be totally remov'd. Sure I am that it's but a very Indifferent Remedy, however Pleafing to this Author: to remove all Zeal for Christianity out of the World, ifor fear that Mankind should Quarrel about it. Nor let it be thought any Reflection on our Religion, or on the Reasonableness of its Principles, or the Evidence of its Truth: to believe it thus wants the Civil Power to Support it. But rather an Evidence of the Corruption and Viciousness of Human Nature. that are not Effectually and Universally to be wrought upon by Truth and Reason only. Alas, there are vast Numbers so utterly Incapable of a Nice Enquiry into the Principles of Truth and Certainty, and who fo

so entirely follow Education rather than Judgment in the Choice of the Best Religion: that even Christianiev it self, altho' incontestibly the Best, the Purest, the most Divine and Rational of any in the World: had not yet so Readily and Universally prevail'd, if Almighty God had not by Miracles on the one hand, and by the Unparal-Iell'd Patience and Conftancy of its Profeffors under the severest Perfecutions on the other, attracted the Eyes and Admiration of all, and Invited them the more Carefully to consider and attend to it. And as it was thus first Propagated and Establish'd, so if once loft by a Removal of its Legal Eftablishments, and an Unlimited Toleration of all false Religions and Principles: such is the Ignorance, Inconfideration, Partiality and Naughtiness of that Human Nature which this Gentleman thinks to fecure when left to it felt, that the the most Excellent and Inestimable Blessing that was ever vouchsafed to the Sons of Men, yet I fear, if once thus loft, it would again want the fame Extraordinary Methods of a new Commission with Miracles and Persecutions, by which it was first propagated, to Re-instate it. Such Prevailing and Dangerous Influence have. Vile Affections and Lufts on the Opinions and Principles of Men; that, undels restrain'd by the help of Government and and Laws, they want all these Extraordinary ways of Overcoming them, and gaining even the most Useful, Important Truths an Easy and Universal Belies. So that in short, one should consider well the State and Condition of Mankind as to our Depravity and Corruption, and to the Loose Defires which Men Cherish, and the Malignant Insluences they are under: before he takes upon him to plead for an Universal and Unlimited Toleration of all Religions, or can well pretend to Judge how Dangerous and Mischie-

yous such a thing must be.

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What I have thus deliver'd on this Subject is with relation only to False Religions, and Loofe, Profane, Mischievous Principles. And those more especially that are levell'd against the Christian Revelation. As to what concerns the Toleration of feveral forts and fects of Christians in a Christian Country; tho' here also the Governors in Church and State have the Power and Authoritative Determination: where the Principles and Practices are less Impious and less Mischievous, there is the less Reason of Exerting their Power in any Violent Manner. The Prudent and Difcreet Use of which is in no sense my Province to enquire into. Only, to let my Adversary see how far I am from Promoting any Persecution: I hope I may be Pardon'd in in offering two short Rules, which, if faithfully observed, would I am sure be very serviceable to that good Purpose. And they are these and they are

tions of Communion be Impos'd, by enjoyning any thing that is contrary to the Laws and Commands of God. by And inselection

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2. That when nothing of this Nature is enjoyn'd, nothing Sinful, nothing Unlawful, the People should not be over Nice, and Unjustly scrupulous about those External Things of an Indifferent Nature, that respect Decency and Order only: but enter not into the Substance of Religion, and confequently cannot be Dangerous to our Souls. And as this our English Church and Nation, according to its present Constitution and Establishment, is wonderfully to be Commended and Admir'd for the one; fo I could heartily wish that there were the same Excellent Spirit of Peace, and Unity, and Order, and good Agreement Univerfally found among all our People on the other. Not to think meanly of the Sacred Ordinances and Institutions of our Religion, nor to Despise the Divine Powers and Privileges of the Christian Church, nor to esteem vifible Communion with it in its Divine Offices a thing Indifferent, or the Administration of 'em fit to be profanely assum'd by every

every Bold Pretender, who has Vanity enough to think highly of his own Capacities.

But left it should be thought that my Zeal against this Author's Antichristian Licentiousness of all Irreligious Principles so vehemently pleaded for by him under the foft and gentle Name of Toleration, should carry me too far: I will add no more on this Subject, but my most Hearty and Affectionate Prayers to the Great God of Peace and Purity, and Good Order. That he would be Graciously pleas'd by his Holy Spirit, fo to Sanctifie and Guide the Hearts both of Governors and People: that each and every one of em in their feveral Stations, may do that which is Acceptable in his fight, for the Honour of our Religion, the Good of his Church, and the Beernal Salvation and Happiness of their own Souls.

Of I Switten and Parlaution. very Bold Pretender, who has Vanity oough to think highly of his cwin Cara-But left it should be divisolt that eal againft this Author's Amidanga les. shemenriv pleaded for by him under oft and gentle Name of Toleralde. erry me too fact I will add no m Hom via and Beide nete Prayers to the Greek Coded oring, and Good Order T Graciously, picas'd by his l Age 4. Line 1. after what read by. P. 13. 1. 10. after L 14. for City r. Church. P. 70. l. 1. for him r. God. P. 81. l. 25. after administer r. the Lord's Supper. P. 197. l. ult. r. by his. P. 214. 1. 25. r. Immortality.

